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PRESENT

STATE AND PROSPECTS

RAV. OF J. S

ITALY:

BY L. MARIOTTI.

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(BEING A CONTINUATION OF THE WORK ENTITLED "ITALY PAST AND PRESENT," BY THE SAME AUTHOR, PUBLISHED IN 1841.)

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ITALY.

Part II.

THE PRESENT.

FIFTH PERIOD.—PRESENT TIMES.

CHAPTER I.

MAZZINI.

The Restoration—First Rise of Italian Nationality—Insurrections of 1820 and 1831—Last Efforts of the Partisans of Physical Force—Mazzini—The Bandiera.

THE sacrifice of Italy was consummated. On that country the revolution had inflicted its most dire calamities—on that country the restoration imposed its hardest conditions.

Of all that Napoleon had done, only the work of destruction was sanctioned. Austria, Sardinia, and the Bourbons; the Pope and the Jesuits, returned; but Genoa, Venice, and Lucca had ceased to exist. The unity of commercial and legislative administration, the uniformity of weight, coin, and measure, were abolished; but the prefecture of the police, the censorship of the press extended to political matters, the military conscription, and other heinous, but oftentimes unavoidable measures, for which the government of the usurper had been held up to the execration of nations, were brought to perfection, and became permanent evils.

The philanthropic reforms of Joseph II. and Peter Leopold, met with no less disregard than the incendiary decrees of the revolution. Italy was to be brought as far

back towards barbarism as the ingenuity of tyranny could contrive.

The Italian governments, especially the courts of Naples and Turin, exiled to their islands of Sardinia and Sicily, had played but an indifferent part in the events that brought about their restoration. They owed their success, under Providence, to the exertions of Austria; and that power omitted no occasion to impress them with the conviction that they depended solely on its support for their very existence. The rulers of the largest, as well as smallest states, the pope himself not excluded, notwithstanding all the *prestige* of his spiritual authority, needed the protection of Austrian bayonets, and held their nominally independent sovereignties under a secret compact of unqualified vassalage.

Thus, the last show of resistance that papal ascendancy, and Venetian and Genoese policy, still opposed to foreign ambition, was overcome by Napoleon. The victors of Napoleon scrupled not to profit by the political crimes on which that fatal hero had based his throne.

Henceforth, not only the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, but the whole of Italy, was but an Austrian province. All and each of those sceptred lieutenants were compelled, within their own territories, to shorten or slacken their reins according to the mandates of the leading power; and, by an extreme refinement of policy, they were made to bear the odium of its recondite measures.

Italy was thus, in fact, under one absolute rule; whilst the confines of her petty states, their different laws and regulations, created a hundred paltry local interests, raising perpetual barriers against all hopes of future regeneration.

By a strange combination of adversities, Italy had thus one and eight masters, uniting all the evils of division, and all the disadvantages of centralisation of power.

But whilst, in a political point of view, all that still remained of ancient Italy had thus definitely come to an

end, the moral character of the nation was gradually developed.

The Italians had been made to think of their country. That fond, and hitherto misdirected patriotism, that had attached them to their native town or state, with all the narrow-mindedness of provincial prejudice, had now no longer any living object to cling to. Not a standard, not an emblem, not a name.

Nothing remained but the annals of the past, big with ominous lessons for the future.

They felt that their ancient republics had successively fallen, only because they had never been true to each other; because each of them hoped to survive alone—to escape its doom by abandoning, sometimes even by pointing out their natural allies and brothers to the ambition of a common enemy; because Venice had stood a neutral spectator of the downfall of Florence, as both had impassively looked on the enslavement of Milan.

It was only when the last day had come for them all, that the deplorable illusion vanished. In its very supreme moment, Venice was still dreaming of its imperishableness.

But after 1798 all local interests had merged into one national interest. The Italians had now no country, or only one country. The destinies of each state depended on the fate of all others. They could only be, or not be together. Henceforth their cry was: INDEPENDENCE AND UNITY.

From the first moment that the Lombard and Venetian patriots perceived by what deeds of rapine and violence the French Jacobins repaid them for the efforts by which they had facilitated their conquest, the first sect of Italian *Independents* arose. They were known by the name of the "Ligue Noire," to the French, who dreaded and hated, and left nothing unattempted to exterminate them. That league, nevertheless, continued to thrive and increase

during the whole period of the occupation of the French, and had no slight influence in bringing about their expulsion.

It numbered among its members, besides many true and intelligent patriots, not a few secret friends of the ancient governments, and zealous defenders of the trampled religion of the country. It indiscriminately enlisted in its ranks the malcontents of all parties. But, although arising from heterogeneous elements, it was bound to a common work, and manifested a common tendency—the emancipation of Italy from foreign bondage.

That sect received a more determined organisation, and proceeded with more deliberate views, in the kingdom of Naples, where, towards the year 1811, a few of the warmest patriots had given rise to the association of the *Carbonari*, and sought among the primitive race of the Apennines the elements of Italian nationality.

Their first attacks were directed against the immediate oppression of the French and Napoleon; and because the overwhelming power and ascending fortune of France gave them but little chance of success, they lent a willing ear to the suggestions of the allies, and, in an evil hour, espoused their cause.

Meanwhile, the fall of Napoleon was at hand. There were few men in Italy who did not hope, none who did not wish for independence. Unfortunately, they did not agree as to the most expedient means of obtaining it. The disasters of the Spanish and Russian campaigns had thinned the ranks of the army of Italy. The flower of the Italian youth had perished abroad, fighting for the enemy's cause. The country lay exhausted and weary. It dreaded the renovation of the calamities of war it had so long endured. The allied powers, that had proved too strong for the whole might of a colossal empire, they thought, could not easily be resisted by a few disarmed, and, as yet, disunited provinces.

Perhaps they could rather be propitiated.

Those same allies, in fact, were lavish of the most splendid promises. The standard of Italian independence and union was seen waving at the head of their armies. The enfranchisement of Italy formed the text of all their proclamations. The Carbonari marched at their vanguard. Eugène and Murat on the one side, Bentinck and Bellegarde on the other, equally announced themselves as the sworn champions of Italy.

The patriots did not, perhaps, all equally plunge into the illusion. But perplexity and discord reigned among them; and before they could come to a close of those hasty and tumultuous deliberations the fate of the country was sealed.

But now, it might be expected, even the last shade of delusion had vanished. The engagements of the allied sovereigns were, of course, null, as soon as their object was attained. The restorers of peace were determined to maintain it at every cost. Whosoever attempted to endanger the public tranquillity, even by the vindication of the most sacred rights, declared war to them all. The Italians had, therefore, nothing to hope, and every thing to fear from abroad. An Italian insurrection was the signal of a European war.

Twenty millions of men, no doubt, would be equal even to that task; but, before engaging in such an undertaking, the patriots must be sure they could rely on a nation of men. Nothing should be attempted until, by a general regeneration of the national character, a race of slaves was raised to the dignity of freemen. The revolution was to be prepared by national education.

This object being obtained, nothing could be easier than to determine all the different states to an almost simultaneous rise; to combat, overthrow, and rebuild. Firmness and unanimity of purpose were sure, in the end, to prevail against Austria, and to command the respect and sympathy

of other nations. What Italy really willed, no effort of allied despots could withstand.

But how many grave, complicate, insurmountable obstacles were thrown into the way of national education! The weariness and inertia of a lazy, ignorant, corrupt population, still aching and bleeding with the consequences of recent political calamities, and shuddering at the very name of soldierly executions; the panic terror inspired by the apparatus of foreign armies, quartered in inexpugnable fortresses, and threatening the most populous towns with imminent, instantaneous ruin; the consciousness of their own effeminate, unwarlike habits—of their almost total destitution of arms, of disciplined soldiers, of experienced leaders; the absolute impracticability of easy and safe communications from state to state; the insecurity of the post-office; the vexations of all kinds to which travellers were subjected; the anxieties caused by a searching, harassing, all-prying police, opposing all spirit of association; its shameless violation of persons and dwellings; the suddenness and mysteriousness of its arbitrary measures; the vigilance, activeness, and invisibility of its numberless agents, and the universal mistrust and demoralisation arising therefrom; the deplorable state of elementary schools, and the iron rule presiding over the direction of the universities; the suppression of the chairs of political economy, of moral philosophy, of every study in which the slightest allusion was made to the rights and duties of men; the censorship, extending its absurd and undiscerning tyranny equally to ancient and modern works, proscribing all organs of public opinion; and, in the meanwhile, the active influence of a dark host of priests and Jesuits, exasperated by their recent reverses, and proceeding with the inveterate animosity of men struggling for existence; the contagious example of eight courts promoting luxury and licentiousness, and, by the means of enervating pleasures, encouraging the indolence and dissipation of the

people—all seemed not only intended to deter the Italian patriots from every attempt to ameliorate the condition of their countrymen, but even to convince them of the impossibility of preventing their utmost degradation and enslavement.

Yet the patriots despaired not.

The ancient league of the Carbonari, whose cooperation in the reinstalment of the ancient governments had been requited with persecution and perjury, now rallied for the purpose of undoing that work of restoration to which they had unwittingly been instrumental.

It joined in secret formidable bands; it called the people around its standard, and unable, in the midst of such arduous circumstances, to educate them, it overawed them by strange rites and mysteries—it bound them by vague but tremendous pledges—it enlisted them into a devoted militia, and prepared them for a certain, though as yet vague and remote hour of action.

Unfortunately, the rapid success of its tenebrous work of affiliation, the numbers and character of its proselytes, without inspiring the league with a full confidence in its own forces, were sufficient to urge its members to rash, premature attempts.

They feared, not without reason, the results of the long-continued attacks of priestcraft on the superstitious credulity of the populace. They perceived among the lowest classes a rapid relapse into their brutal habits. They were unwilling to allow the last swell of revolutionary effervescence to subside into the deathlike apathy of servitude. They wished, by the aid of a partial, transitional revolution, to bestow on a portion of the country, at least, the advantages of freedom of thought, of the liberty of the press, of a representative government. They hoped that one of the Italian states might thus be made the focus of a general insurrectional system—might afford them leisure for a gradual rise of public opinion—might furnish

them with the instruments wherewith to counteract the influence of so many evil elements, and openly proceed to their great work of national education.

Events were soon favourable to the realisation of this short-sighted policy. Spain, which at the restoration had also been the victim of deceptive promises, had successfully risen against its perjured monarch, and obliged him to fulfil his engagements.

Ferdinand of Naples had been no less liberal of fair offers, nor less ready to violate the sanctity of his compact with his people, than Ferdinand of Spain. The Italians thought that he might as easily be compelled to grant, or rather to restore that constitution which had been bestowed upon his Sicilian subjects in 1812, under English patronage, and which had been most unaccountably annulled in 1814.

They could do it, and did it. It cost them scarcely a drop of blood. The King of Naples was at the mercy of the Carbonari.

But the Neapolitan and the Piedmontese insurrections of 1820 and 1821 were not, nor were meant, as a national revolution. They were only an initiatory movement by which the lovers of Italian independence would have enabled themselves to remove all obstacles to the emancipation of thought.

They had no faith in French charters or Spanish constitutions; no feelings of devotion towards the kings or princes whom they placed at the head of the movement. But they flattered themselves that royal names could have power to sanction popular deeds; that they could reform the state without affording any legitimate pretext for foreign interference; that England, France, and other constitutional powers, would be the natural allies of governments which followed a system of policy analogous to their own; that the diplomatists of 1814 would consider themselves bound to support an insurrection, whose avowed

object only was the vindication of those rights of which they had all stood forward as guarantees and sponsors.

In accordance with these views, they carefully avoided every allusion to the name of Italy, of independence and unity, to which, however, all their efforts were directed, and which was already almighty in the hearts of all. They strove to allay the tide of popular enthusiasm that threatened to drag them, in spite of themselves, beyond the limits prescribed by their narrow-minded foresight; they rejected the fraternity of neighbouring states; discouraged, disarmed, and demoralised the ardent youths who had run to arms, and who were willing to attack, rather than to abide the enemy; and allowed their conquered, captive monarchs to repair to Laybach, to abjure their oaths, and, at the head of the Austrians, to march against the rebels whilst yet unprepared and discordant.

It was not long before the Italians perceived the consequences of their infatuation. Austria pledged herself to the maintenance of peace, and was by her allies left the only arbiter of the destinies of Italy. The success was not an instant doubtful.

The insurgents of 1821 paid dearly for their experiment; yet it was neither the sole nor the last trial.

The great process of national regeneration continued. The progress and diffusion of knowledge; the increase of wealth and population necessarily resulting, even in an oppressed country, from the long continuance of peace; the interchange, development, and diffusion of ideas, even through the organ of a fettered press; the intercourse with other nations more happily situated, was, in a considerable degree, sufficient to give increase and consistency to public opinion.

The long and severe punishments with which the deluded patriots were visited, by which mourning and desolation were thrown into the bosom of the most influential families; the stifled groans from the dungeons of Spiel-

berg; the blood from the scaffolds of Modena had roused the dormant resentment—the active sympathy of the people.

There was no longer any necessity for resorting to secret societies. What had been the result of subterranean conspiracies was now to be effected by open, spontaneous insurrections. The passions of the multitude needed no further incitement.

Nothing was wanted but a favourable opportunity.

The Italians were now almost ripe for a complete revolution; extraneous circumstances once more determined them to a second partial experiment.

France had risen. It had, in July 1830, overthrown the work of foreign invaders. It had separated itself from the interests of the holy alliance. It had thrown the gauntlet to despotism. It had dragged, in its movement, Belgium, Poland, and a part of Germany. It had made an appeal to the malcontents of all Europe. It had entered with all nations into a pact of non-intervention. That pact had thus far been respected and, as it were, tacitly acknowledged.

The Italians resolved to try how far that compact would hold good for themselves.

It was thought that the non-intervention might, by the means of sectional revolts, pave the way for the success of a general national effort; that the fear of a war with France would stay the sword of Austria in its scabbard, until the insurgents felt themselves ready to attack that power within its very strongholds of Lombardy.

They rose. They directed their first attacks against those governments whence the least resistance might be expected. The Duke of Modena, the most cordially hated; the pope, the most utterly despised of all Italian rulers; the Duchess of Parma, by her profligacy degraded in the eyes of her subjects, were overthrown without an obstacle. The tricolour standard flew like a meteor from town to

town. Not a sword was unsheathed—not a voice raised for the cause of despotism. In less than three days two millions of Italians were free.

But the movement of 1831, like that of 1821, was influenced by foreign insinuations. It was grounded on views of foreign diplomacy: all revolutionary measures were limited to prevent any provocation of hostilities, by a blind adhesion to the pact of non-intervention. No decisive step could be taken until it was fully ascertained how far Austria would abide by it; how far that power might be overawed by the proclamations of France. Still not a word was said about Italy, to give the insurrection the appearance of a national rise. All was paralysed, from its earliest start, by that inconceivable hallucination.

For a moment, indeed, it seemed as if Austria dreaded to come to an open rupture. The Austrian garrison at Ferrara withdrew from the town, and suffered the national colours to wave triumphantly before their eyes. But it was only for a moment. No sooner had the cabinet of Vienna ascertained the real intentions of Louis Philippe, than the Hungarians advanced. The insurgents offered no resistance.

The unsatisfactory result of those successive insurrections has branded the Italians with a disgrace that, as a nation, they did not, perhaps, entirely deserve. They have been set down as a faint-hearted race, unwilling to fight for, and therefore unworthy of liberty.

The bitterest reproach of cowardice and pusillanimity awaited the fugitives in the land of exile, as the only welcome they had a right to expect from unsympathising strangers. France, especially, by whose perfidious suggestions these ill-digested movements were precipitated, loaded with ignominy those refugees whose too ready submission exposed her own territory to the dangers of an Austrian invasion. The dastardly defection of the Italian

liberals was contrasted with the torrents of blood that the Polish heroes were then shedding, rather alas! for France than for Poland. The Italians would not have been less unfeelingly sacrificed than the Poles; but every battle they had given would have operated a diversion in favour of France, and obtained fair terms for her from the allies.

But, be it repeated, the Italian nation had not yet risen. No Italian revolution had, in reality, taken place; and the unsuccessful attempts of 1821 and 1831 were only meant as a preparatory step, as a transitional movement, by the aid of which, it was expected, the germs of Italian regeneration might be sown, and the final catastrophe slowly and safely matured.

Those unhappy revolts were the consequence of false principles, of fond misconceptions; of an imperfect acquaintance with the positive relations between Austria and the so-called independent states—with the real views of foreign diplomacy; of a blind reliance on vague suggestions from abroad.

Had the insurrection, from its very beginning, developed its national character; had the cry of Italian unity and independence been raised at once; had not the revolution, in short, been disavowed by its authors, the event might have been more than doubtful.

The movement would have been general and instantaneous: it would have begun where the elements of immediate resistance were to be found. Its first step would have been an irruption into Lombardy—a declaration of war to Austria.

But not even the rapidity of their success, not even the unanimity of the people, could inspire the leaders with sufficient faith and determination. Indeed, the very facility of those first movements seemed to unfit them for the ensuing struggle. They seemed to flatter themselves that liberty could be maintained as easily as it had been

obtained. They were willing to preserve in its purity that bloodless revolution in which they, very justly, prided themselves.

But it is fated that freedom can never be asserted on earth, without long and desperate strife; that it is never fully established until it is cemented with blood; that it can only be won and secured by a nation that feels in its own energies the means of asserting it against all odds—the will to obtain it at any rate.

In pursuance of their chimerical views, those patriots not only neglected to avail themselves of such means as the universal effervescence afforded them, but turned all their efforts to discountenance the impatient zeal of the ardent youths who entered not into their views. They employed all the arguments of persuasion, and even open force, to banish all ideas of resistance; and seemed, above all things, anxious to remove every obstacle to the enemy's progress.

This unnatural conduct, so very nearly bordering on treason, was, however, dictated by the most sincere and pious, though certainly not very magnanimous intentions.

The idea of Austrian omnipotence was deeply rooted in the hearts of the aged men who were generally intrusted with the government of the revolted provinces. The conviction that bands of undisciplined citizens could withstand the charge of a regular soldiery could never enter their minds. In their eagerness to avoid all subjects of collision —of subduing the bold spirits which would have naturally risen from the consciousness of their own forces—they would never allow the Italian youths to be mustered into national battalions. Hence, when the spell of illusion was broken, and the Austrian advanced, they had done all in their power, not only to disarm, but to unman the defenders of the country.

The horrors of military licentiousness, such as they had witnessed during twenty years of recent invasions, were still present to their terrified imaginations; they saw the

awful calamities to which the slightest show of resistance would expose their helpless countrymen.

They feared not for themselves. The heroic death that some of those same faint-hearted patriots sought on the battle-field, in Greece, in Spain, every where in the land of exile; the firmness with which others underwent the ordeal of long imprisonment; and the serene countenance which they bore on the scaffold; are sufficient to absolve them from the charge of personal timidity.

But a foreboding charity towards their native cities, towards their homes, towards an unprotected crowd of women, against whom the outrages of Pavia and Verona would be perpetrated, did not allow them, in that moment of perturbation, to think of the indelible stain they inflicted on the glory of the Italian name; of the demoralising effect that the example of that ungenerous surrender would have on future generations; of the discredit that their cowardice would bring on the cause of liberty all over the world.

They did not reflect that, however justifiable their apprehensions might be before the insurrection took place, as soon as the signal was given it became their duty to stifle all feelings of regret and misgiving in their bosom, and to impress themselves and their followers with the sacredness of the compact into which they had entered—of asserting their freedom, or dying for it.

God knows, there were many in Italy willing to die!

Humbled even more than disheartened by these repeated failures, the Italians were not likely to venture again on similar experiments. They had thus far at least profited by their disappointment, that no ground was left for future illusion. They had come to a conclusion which, as we have said, ought to have been obvious before the disastrous trial took place, but which they had lost sight of in their sanguine impatience—that, as long as they lent a willing ear to the perfidious insinuations of foreigners; as long as they relied upon aid from without, to fight the battle with

their oppressors, they betrayed their incompetency to maintain the position of a free state; and that such assistance, even if ever rendered, would ultimately serve only to prepare them for the evils of renewed servitude. They felt that their emancipation must be the result of their own efforts; and that it must be accomplished, not only without the direct or indirect interference of foreign powers in their behalf, but even, if necessary, in open opposition to all and each of them.

Hence they had, at least for the present, relinquished every thought of an armed vindication of their national rights; and, with the tactics of a general who changes his siege into a blockade, they had returned to their primitive schemes for the regeneration of their national character, for the general diffusion of knowledge among the lowest classes, for a forcible restoration of their name in the opinion of their neighbours.

They hoped that, reassured by the long continuance of peace, and prevailed upon by the overwhelming force and unanimity of public opinion, their governments would gradually feel compelled to acknowledge that there *was* an Italy; and that, if by the right of self-preservation they were entitled to quench all insurrectional spirit tending to bring about a national, political unity, they could not be able to prevent their subjects from uniting to aid and encourage each other in the promotion of public welfare, and in the diffusion of intellectual culture.

A complete moral revolution, it was thought, must precede any political movement.

But the malison of Heaven seemed to hang over unfortunate Italy. That popular education which foreign despots countenance, and even enforce abroad, was the object of the blind persecution of the Italian rulers. The head of the church, especially during the pontificate of Leo XII., and Gregory XVI., launched the thunders of the Vatican against its promoters. The inoffensive schoolmaster was

thrown into the dungeons of the castle Sant' Angelo. Despotism felt that opinion was force, and trusted that chains and fetters might yet be able to crush it.

Relentlessness on the part of the sovereigns could not fail to lead to desperate opposition on the part of the people. The age of physical force had not yet reached its termination. The Italians could not so soon be made to enter into the views of a passive-resistance policy. They could not be unanimously wrought into submission, even though they could not be aroused into general and simultaneous outbreaks. Savoy in 1833, Bologna and Rimini in 1843 and 1845, were again made the theatre of unsuccessful, because partial and inconsiderate, attempts. The Neapolitan provinces were never thoroughly at rest; and, even during the prevalence of the deepest silence, the Italian tyrants were aware that the tenebrous work of conspiracy was incessantly in progress.

The truculent maxims, the half appalling, half ludicrous ceremonies of exploded Carbonarism were superseded by the simpler forms, by the more sanguine and sweeping views of a new association. The opposition party was now represented by the sect of Young Italy.

Amongst the swarm of exiles the calamities of 1831 drove to the French shores, a young enthusiast made his appearance, unknown as yet, to the multitude, but uniting the boldest ambition to the highest capacities: a man of firm principles; of that pale, bilious temperament so common in southern climates, whose passions all obey but themselves—a man born to rule; of that stuff of which, under favourable circumstances, Robespierres are made, or Napoleons; but who, in quieter times, are too readily set down as *hommes manqués*, or visionaries—a young student, a Genoese of good extraction and parentage—Giuseppe Mazzini.

It was in June 1831 that he first made himself known in France—though his contributions to the *Antologia di*

Firenze ought to have won him reputation before—by his address to Charles Albert of Savoy *, on his accession to the throne of Sardinia, inviting him not to disappoint the expectations he had raised in Italy in 1820, when, being only prince of Carignano, and presumptive heir to the throne, he was hailed as king of Italy, and styled himself the chief of all the Carbonari in the country. That address of Mazzini was a flash of divine eloquence, such as never before shone over Italy. His companions in misfortune gathered in adoration, and bent before his powerful genius. There was that in his massive brow, in his dark, commanding eye, that at once set him apart from the common herd. In the first prime of youth, a beauty of the first order, and a frank and manly, yet winning and suasive address, gave him an easy victory over men's minds through their hearts. He did not fail to make the best of this well-deserved popularity. Ere the year had elapsed, he became the heart and soul of the Italian movement. He was the ruler of a state of his own creation—the king of Young Italy.

He established himself at Marseilles, as editor of a journal, called after the name of the new sect of which it was the intended organ, "La Giovine Italia." Several numbers of that journal appeared at different intervals in the course of that and the following year. Mazzini wrote the best part of its contents. In fact, he never was seconded by efficient contributors.

Either because the management of his vast plans of conspiracy engrossed too much of his time, or because his genius was wearied and exhausted at its very first start, his articles seemed to have lost not a little of that calmness and serenity, of that dignity and temperance which characterised his first effort. The fretful jealousy of his fellow-exiles was easily alarmed by what they called his

* A Carlo Alberto di Savoia, un Italiano, Italia, 1831.

imperious ambition, his sweeping exclusiveness. The most high-minded and generous of his associates fell from him, one by one; and, compelled to rely on the cooperation of blindly devoted but indiscreet and incautious partisans, he hurried on his insurrectional schemes, leading to the more disgraceful than disastrous invasion of Savoy in 1833.

Many an ardent patriot would have withdrawn from active life after so signal a defeat. Not so Mazzini. Humbled, but not disheartened—anxious to throw all the blame upon General Romarino, the military leader of the expedition, he widened still further the breach already existing between him and the moderate party. Disappointed in his own countrymen, he looked on the whole earth for the furtherance of his redeeming ideas. The patriot merged into the humanitarian. He gave the utmost extension to his plans by the new and more catholic associations of "Young France," "Young Poland," "Young Switzerland," and finally "Young Europe," all of these based on his original notion—that of the expediency of trusting political movements with young and consequently unpledged and uncompromising leaders—a notion which, under the strangest modifications and misconceptions, was destined to make the tour of the globe.

Mazzini's views, however, were at first perfectly correct, and had arisen from the honest conviction of the utter impotence, imbecility, and even insincerity of the old Carbonari, who had hitherto had the upper hand in Italian affairs. Mazzini undertook to break the idols of the Italian patriots; to do away with the *prestige* of illustrious names—all was to be achieved "by the people and for the people." The revolution should acknowledge no leaders, save only such as might spring from its own bosom. The national cause should henceforth obey the impulse of new men, proceeding upon new principles—young believers, wedded to no preconceived system, who would disavow and trample upon the craven dictates of a timid, temporising policy—

the wily intrigues of foreign diplomacy, who would march straight to their aim, regardless of all odds and chances, trusting God only, and themselves, and the sanctity of their cause.

In the pursuance of such principles, the apostle was gradually left alone. The hopes of the lovers of Italy began to be grounded on mild and moderate measures. The revolution was to be effected by the ascendancy of moral force. D'Azeglio, Balbo, and the party now at the head of the Italian movement, gained the ear of the multitude. Mazzini was left to himself, and the few closely acquainted with him, whose devotion to the loftiness of his mind and heart was paramount to all prudential considerations. In common with all men of really transcendant abilities, of truly elevated character, it was the lot of Mazzini to be cordially hated by such as knew him least, and would, nevertheless, have been his worthiest associates; and loved with utter blindness by those who could neither comprehend nor aid him. Certainly, none of his intimates ever voluntarily fell away from his friendship; but subservient affection, ill-judged deference, contributed no less than ill-grounded aversion to obstruct his judgment and hurry his deliberations. Out of so many who sided for or against him, Mazzini never had a friend or enemy worthy of him: hardly ever an agent that was not a passive instrument in his hands. Together with a gentleness—an almost feminine tenderness of outward manner—he combined the utmost stubbornness of conviction, and the fiercest intolerance of contradiction—Cooperation with him must imply blind, unconditional compliance.

Involved in rash attempts against all governments, condemned to death in Italy, banished from France, proscribed in Switzerland, he finally sought the only refuge against political persecution—the free soil of Old England. With a shattered constitution and a broken heart, a disappointed man, in spite of all his asseverations to the contrary,

he engaged in the harmless pursuit of a literary career, diving, perhaps, too deeply into the dreams and vagaries of French communism, and choosing his associates among the English radicals and socialists; a grovelling, calculating race, as widely removed from the chivalrous disinterestedness of the Italian republican, as a London fog from the golden vapours of an Italian summer evening.

In a vain endeavour to bring their ideas to bear some resemblance to his own luminous, however Utopian, theories, Mazzini was gradually sinking in silence and oblivion, engulphed in what Count Pecchio not unaptly calls "the tomb of living reputations," the great world of London. Visited with awe and misgiving by the few young Italians who could snatch a passport from the reluctant hands of a jealous police, dignifying a few honest teachers and artisans, and others of his humbler countrymen established in London into a national association —an object of the vain regrets and longings of the rising generation, of the mistrust and rancour of the base Italian governments, who persisted in looking upon him as the unattainable head of the revolutionary hydra—

> "By deepest pity here pursued,
> And hate no less profound;
> By love no fear could quell, by rage
> No length of time assuage*;"

he resigned himself to a life of silence and loneliness, satisfied with the foundation of an Italian school for mendicant organ-boys, in which he employed all his energies with the same zeal and earnestness as Macchiavello displayed in his diplomatic transactions between two rival communities of nuns; and, like a man conscious of the extent of his powers, no less than of the uprightness of his intentions, he was "biding his time."

* Manzoni.

The English government thought proper to draw him from his retreat. The unknown writer of anonymous articles in the "Westminster Review" was dignified into a dangerous political character. By a base treachery which, up to the present occurrence, was deemed utterly *un-English*, the Secretary of State made himself subservient to the demands of foreign espionage, outdid by superior cunning the dirtiest tricks of the most abject continental police, and, upon detection of his flagrant abuse of power and breach of confidence, he attempted to vindicate his conduct by the wilful repetition of long-exploded, long-forgotten falsehoods against the man he had wronged.

Mazzini came out of that disgraceful contest with all the honours of the day. That insane persecution secured for him, in England, that public respect and sympathy to which his talents and integrity, no less than his misfortunes, would otherwise have entitled him. It did not, however, nor could it, add much to his reputation or influence in Italy. New ideas had long been springing up in that country to which Mazzini was, from the first, too utterly a stranger, ever to be willing to adopt them. The principles of "Liberty and Equality," "Unity and Independence," on which the national association was originally based, were no longer deemed practicable. Their very utterance was deemed in the highest degree impolitical. Mazzini's position was now untenable; and, as he was too well known for his unconquerable consistency and tenacity of purpose, he was left to perish alone, or with those few blind enthusiasts—like the ill-fated Bandiera and their accomplices—who still continued true to the militant faith of young Italy.

It would not be reasonable, however, to conclude that any well-meaning Italian entertains ideas greatly at variance with Mazzini's, as to the justice of his country's claims to the full enjoyment of her independent rights; or to fancy that any remnant of feudal or patrician in-

terests might clash with the spread of purely republican principles; or that the least shadow of loyalty lurks in Italian hearts in behalf of any of the royal dynasties now in existence. We have said it; the Italians are all, at heart, republicans. Were the destinies of the country to be settled to-morrow by the returns of universal suffrage, the result would most undoubtedly be what Mazzini and a thousand before him proclaimed: "the Italian Republic, one and indivisible."

But, although in the abstract, and in a general point of view, the emancipation of their country from foreign power is and ever was the object of all patriotic endeavours, though every one felt that independence could only be secured by a bond of immediate, absolute unity, that a democratic form of government would be natural, and, as it were, indigenous in Italy; that no monarchic or aristocratic elements could be found among the families of their pseudo-national princes, among the impoverished and degraded members of their native nobility—yet they did not all equally admit of the possibility of establishing a new republican state immediately on the basis of the present social edifice; nay, even of vindicating their independence in the face of all hostile Europe.

Many of the moderate Liberals deemed the sudden transition from utter servitude to the intoxicating excitement of popular freedom fraught with hazard and danger; they thought the name of republic irreconcilably obnoxious to all the powers in being, and put forward transitional and conciliatory measures. They voted, some of them, for the creation of a strong, independent, constitutional government in the north of Italy, to be given either to a prince of the house of Savoy, or to any other adventurer, in fact, whose ambition might be tempted to venture on such an enterprise. With such a state at the head of an Italian confederacy, the reduction and incorporation of the weaker states would be left to time and the natural

extinction of dynasties. The unification of Italy would thus be gradual and pacific; state after state would vanish from the list of European potentates, even as Lucca has now been, or is about to be, aggregated to the grand duchy of Tuscany.

Others, again, dreading that the lustre of so many capitals would diminish in consequence of their losing their rank; reflecting, also, on the provincial and municipal enmities—the bequest of old republican divisions—alleging the various degrees of civilisation attained by the different districts of the Peninsula; and appealing to the memories of the past, showing how wealth, power, and prosperity might be compatible in Italy with territorial division—would still prefer a *union* rather than the *unity* of Italy; a federation of states, more or less free, somewhat after the models of Switzerland or Germany.

But the *moderatism* of the Italian patriots has lately gone one step further. Till now, however discordant on other matters, they all agreed on one great point—the expulsion of the Austrian. All projects of reform, all plans for a confederacy, must take their start from the happy close of the war of emancipation. The great national contest must be fought out and settled, ere the Italians come to an arrangement of their differences with their native rulers. The constitution proclaimed at Naples in 1820, the insurrection of Romagna in 1831 were only initiatory movements; the leaders of those movements scarcely took the trouble of disguising their ulterior views. Every blow dealt against their princes was actually aimed at their northern patron and supporter.

Their kings and dukes were looked upon as the mere vanguard of one common enemy, and a skirmish with them was only a prelude to a decisive battle.

But now the quarrel with Austria is set indefinitely aside. No war, local or general, is any longer contemplated. The Italians are to emancipate themselves by

the prevalence of "Moral Force." Their princes are to be won over by conciliation and peaceful remonstrance. The work of national regeneration is to proceed with their good will and consent. A competition for the public welfare must spring up between them and their late opponents. Already these latter, with D'Azeglio, Gioberti, and Balbo at their head, are making advances to them. A compact of friendship and good will between rulers and subjects has sprung up, especially at Rome, Florence, and Turin. State after state will be made to adhere to this conciliatory policy. Such as have adopted its views will join in an offensive and defensive league. Their calm but firm demeanour, the justice of their claims, the sanctity of the law of nations will soon make them unconquerable—nay, unassailable: and when they deem themselves sufficiently strong for mutual protection, they will come to a settlement of their old dispute with their northern invader, either by peaceful or by any other means.

We shall have opportunity to enter more at length into the views of the moderate party now in the ascendancy throughout the Italian peninsula. Suffice it to say, for the present, that they are at the very antipodes of the measures recommended by the founder of Young Italy.

Mazzini continued unmoved. At every new phasis expediency compelled the liberal party successively to assume, his voice was ever raised in loud deprecation, if not in bitter protest. He never ceased to declaim against the narrow-minded policy the result of which could only be to plunge the country into the disgrace and misery of 1820 and 1831. He thought extreme evils admitted of extreme remedies alone. He urged the necessity of enlisting the multitude in their cause, by an open avowal of their intention of placing the sovereignty in the hands of the people. He thought the revolution of Italy could only be accomplished by a general and simultaneous de-

claration of war against all the powers now extant: an insurrectional war, prepared by the secret work of conspiracies, determined by the open proclamation of a well-defined principle, and carried on by a well-directed system of popular guerillas. It is but fair to avow that none but raving enthusiasts—such as the ill-fated Count Bianco, who developed Mazzini's plans of national warfare in a work entitled, "Della guerra per bande"—ever embraced Mazzini's views to their full extent: nay, we honestly think, Mazzini himself cannot deem them such as will admit of immediate execution in the present state of the country, and with the actual enervation and degradation of the national character. His theory, we believe, was, at any rate, prematurely produced, and he never made a mystery of his want of confidence in the elements the present generation afforded. His ideas were, perhaps, only prospective; and it was only, perhaps, the importunity or rashness of his subalterns or the fear of being charged with *Utopianism*, irresolution, or inactivity, that led to the ill-fated attempts of 1833.

He must, however, take the consequences not only of his own errors of judgment, but of those, also, of his adherents and partisans. Hardly a riot of the populace in Romagna, hardly a bandit fray in Calabria, but is ascribed to the instigations and manœuvres of Young Italy. Since 1831, the Italian police seemed to dread Mazzini alone—all the vigilance of Austrian and Modenese spies were turned against him; he was magnified into an awful bugbear, even when he had already begun to despair of his countrymen, and his countrymen of him.

It is for these reasons that vain, to a great extent, were his efforts to clear himself of all participation in the senseless expedition ending in the tragic catastrophe of Cosenza, in 1845. The brothers Bandiera were among his most fervent worshippers. They perished martyrs to their affection

for him. Every word he has published of their correspondence with him breathes this transcendant faith and devotion. It was with them a political religion. Even so did Young Italy love her creator!

The Bandiera were young and impatient. Their rank, their means, they conceived, had placed in their hands the fate of the country. The Austrian marine only awaited their signal. They threw themselves and their resources at the feet of the enchanter. He was himself at a loss how to dispose of them; how to sober, without disheartening them. He gave them words of applause—of encouragement; but of caution and temporisation at the same time. Their position at Trieste became precarious—threatening. With the chill of despair at heart, but with unshaken faith, they emigrated. Again, from Corfu, they addressed him—they adjured him; they spoke no word of reproach—of repining; they gave the past to oblivion; they nourished no hope for the future; their letter was only a farewell word; they acquainted him with their determination—to die!

Without Mazzini's knowledge, against his advice, the Bandiera rushed to their doom; they laboured under no illusion—reckoned on no cooperation: disappointment had led to hopeless sorrow and a distaste for existence; they came to die—no matter by whose hand—no matter by what means or in what manner: they were armed; they were well-tried soldiers; they could have sold their life at the highest price—they laid down their arms; they chose the publicity, the speechless solemnity, of the scaffold—they obtained their intent.

We shuddered for them nevertheless. Had the King of Naples been any thing less than the greatest imbecile, their object might yet be frustrated. Sublime as they were in death, it was in the power of the tyrant to make them ridiculous. A show of royal clemency had degraded

the awful tragedy into a pitiful farce—the self-immolation of desponding patriotism into a bravado in the Louis-Napoleon style.

Insane rigour sanctified them. Blood redeemed them. They despaired and died. Let those laugh who dare! No martyrdom is commonplace—no drop of blood is wasted—since blood ransomed the earth!

CHAPTER II.

FOSCOLO.

Italian Exiles—Foscolo—His Reception in England—English Feeling towards Foreigners—Foscolo's Posthumous Works—Fate of Italian Exiles in England—In France.

ALL that Mazzini is, or has been, to the Italian youth of the present generation, Foscolo was before him. There is something in this adoration of the Italian people for their political exiles that foreign nations may not readily understand. Time was when a few refugees had power to turn the course of destiny; when a band of houseless *fuorusciti* dictated the law to the state that had driven them from its bosom. They clustered in arms at the borders; they summoned around them their partisans and retainers; they sought aiders and abettors from any of the emulous cities; beyond the Alps, beyond the sea, they looked for friends among their enemy's enemies. Down they came, swelling, as they moved, like an avalanche; filling the earth with their grievances, enlisting every description of adventurers in their cause. They laid waste the green fields of their fatherland, took their home by storm, entered their native town through a breach in the wall. Anon came the day of retaliation; and it was their adversaries' turn to feel the "savour of other people's bread."

The Italians were too soon deprived of the power of doing each other injury. Too soon they ceased to look to their banished countrymen for rescue or redress. These

latter did not fail to carry with them all their regrets and sympathies nevertheless. They were men who had, no matter how unsuccessfully, aspired to their country's deliverance; striven against the order of things all equally execrated; men who had borne witness—martyrs.

It so happened, also, that proscription, like the thunder of Heaven, alighted on none but the loftiest eminences. Emigration drained the country of its intellectual and moral worth; from the incessant vicissitudes of old republican feuds, from the calamitous times of the Reformation down to the wholesale depopulation of Romagna and Modena under Gregory XVI. and Francis IV., Italy—the Niobe of nations—had always to mourn over the loss of the noblest among her sons.

It seemed fated, likewise, that the greatest achievements, especially as warriors, navigators, and statesmen, were performed by the Italians in distant climates, and in the service of foreign potentates. Either because urged by necessity, or because allowed free scope of action, Italian genius seemed to gain by expansion. As in the case of Mirabeau or Napoleon, both the descendants of Tuscan exiles, it flashed forth, meteor-like, after having lain dormant through generations.

Italy exulted in the success of her illustrious outcasts. Many an obscure fugitive, like Count Rossi, was sent back to the state that drove him forth, clothed in all the inviolability of diplomatic importance; many an unknown wanderer, like Panizzi, had reason to desire his best compliments and thanks to the craven despot who hung him in effigy, and by his iniquitous sentence afforded him an opening to a useful and distinguished career. *Perieramus nisi periissemus!*

The calamities of Italy, since 1814, never sent abroad a loftier mind or a more generous heart than Foscolo's. Few persons in this country ever heard, fewer still would care to know, much about Ugo Foscolo. Some of the deni-

zens of the Alpha Road may, perhaps, be aware that their charming suburban district derived its classical name from one of the most unfortunate whims of the eccentric Italian. Some may remember having met him as a "haunter of Murray's shop and of literary parties;" others may have heard or read of him in the memoirs of contemporary writers who designate him as "one of those animals who are lions at first, but, by the transformation of two seasons, become, in regular course, bores."

It was far otherwise with his countrymen. The reputation of their exiled bard rose at every stroke of the hour. Every line of his inedited writings was treasured up in careful editions; several men of distinguished abilities had long been collecting materials for his biography. Thoughts were even entertained about a deputation from the various Italian states to the parish of Chiswick, requesting to be allowed to remove Foscolo's remains from the lowly grave friendship had laid him in, to be deposited, with a pomp more worthy of the author of "The Tombs," by the side of Macchiavelli and Alfieri, in the Pantheon of Santa Croce.

Ugo Foscolo arrived in England with a most enviable character, and under peculiarly favourable circumstances. He was preceded by little short of a hero's reputation. He was also received as a confederate; he had fought Britain's cause, even whilst wearing Napoleon's uniform; he had refused his homage to the throne before which monarchs bowed and trembled; he had stood aloof from the crowd, unmoved by threat or bribery, and his dignified silence had called back a blind multitude from servile idolatry.

Nor was this all. He came to this country as a gifted bard, a profound scholar, a most popular writer. Fame had even exaggerated the merit of productions, which were then hardly known to English readers, the real beauties of which, from their strictly Italian character, will probably remain a sealed book for them to the end of time.

Foscolo's mind, like his heart, wanted steadfastness of

purpose. He would withdraw for a season among the abstruse lucubrations of unwieldy scholarship, as he would pine in wanton indolence at the feet of a tyrant beauty. Inordinate in all his views and pursuits, in his very ambition, Foscolo was satisfied with showing only by glimpses the superiority of his intellect, without ever fulfilling the true mission of a leading mind. But he landed in England in the flower of unbroken manhood. The days of active life and political struggle were, for a space, at an end. Had he been able to find peace and leisure on these shores; had true hospitality and cordial friendship had power to soothe disappointment, and an English home to compensate for the country he was irreparably severed from, his literary career might be said to commence with his exile.

There were many reasons, however, why Foscolo should be, at the utmost, an object of idle curiosity and transitory interest in this country. Hospitality is a public as well as a private virtue; nay, more; in proportion as the progress of civilisation, the macadamising of roads, and floor-carpeting of country inns, enable the wanderer to carry his home in his purse, the duties of the reception of strangers devolve on the state at large; and the share that every citizen takes in them is more often the result of his political sympathies than the effect of his charitable feelings.

England has, at all times, laid the highest claims to this patriarchal benevolence towards the houseless stranger. Every letter in the laws of the country seems intended as a refutation of the old Latin adage—

"Britannos hospitibus feros."

From the despotic ruler of sixty millions to the starving organ-grinder and broom-girl, the land of refuge is equally open to all. As at the famous carnival of Venice, dethroned kings, disgraced viziers, and bankrupt financiers, may be seen jostling each other in the London streets.

The people are equally anxious not to be found in the rear of such liberal institutions; a letter of introduction to an Englishman is a bill at sight on his kitchen and larder.

An exile of Foscolo's character and capacities needed no other encouragement. An open field in which fair play should be granted to his talents; a community blessed with unbounded freedom of opinion, in which he might equally vindicate his political principles and honourably provide for his subsistence, and a circle of friends to cheer him in his struggles and rejoice in his success; a new home—a new fatherland—in which he might, as it were, be born again, and start on a new sphere of existence—*hoc erat in votis.*

The times, we have said, were uncommonly calculated to secure him a kindly reception. The barriers which had, for more than twenty years, shut up the Continent against English curiosity, were hardly broken through. Continental life, as modified by the havoc of revolutionary disorders, was yet imperfectly understood; continental people were as yet unfamiliar objects in the streets of London. Woe to Ugo Foscolo, who mistook curiosity and *lionising* spirit for genuine sympathy and affection! Many of the living generation may remember how eagerly he was sought out, flattered, cajoled, led from one to the other of the mighty coteries of that eventful era. It would have turned a far steadier head than Foscolo, who had so little soberness and discretion in his composition. This was the first instance on record, and most probably the last, of a foreigner killed by English kindness.

A fish astrand could scarcely be more out of his element than Foscolo amid the fashionable circles amongst which he was so suddenly, and, to say the truth, so uncharitably exhibited. Independent of his "baboon-like ugliness," a fault more unpardonable in this than in any other Christian country, he must have appeared little less than a savage in a society where "manners make the man." For

awhile his social solecisms, as well as his glaring eyes, unkempt whiskers, and squeaking voice, may have passed as piquant oddities, and even afforded a pleasing contrast to the prim stiffness of the French royalist emigrants, who had, for the last quarter of a century, monopolised the boon of English hospitality—men "who had suffered losses," and could only be eloquent on that doleful subject. But it could not be long ere Foscolo's eccentricities appeared not wholly untainted with ill-breeding.

How, indeed, could it have been otherwise? A mere boy when he left the university, where the Jesuits taught him more Greek than manners, his military and demagogic career was not likely to give him the tone of a civilised being. There was an epoch, and we seem to be scarcely aware of it, when people on the Continent were ashamed of the behaviour, no less than of the name, of a gentleman. Blackguardism was the order of the day. At the head of armies, in the council-house, in every branch of administration, the manners of a *gendarme* were universally to be met with. We need only read the familiar conversation of such heroes as Augereau, Lannes, and Massena, or even of the crowned heads, Murat and Buonaparte themselves, to be aware at every word of the sphere of life from which most of them sprang. Born of a good family, and by no means dead to aristocratic feelings, Foscolo might, perhaps, have soon got over that low-bred assurance, which was not indigenous in him, and attuned himself to that staid and measured quietness that smoothes down all asperities of individual character to a uniform pattern of gentlemanly demeanour. But Foscolo had been irreparably spoiled by his own countrymen. In their veneration for men of genius and valour, the Italians exceed even the most transcendant ideas of Mr. Carlyle's *Hero-Worship*. Like the Fakir in the East, a poet in Italy is a being on whom the Spirit of the Lord has lighted. His sallies of downright madness are fits of divine inspiration. Indeed they

do not believe in the existence of genius unless it be revealed by some traits of very absurd eccentricity. This privilege Foscolo enjoyed *à l'outrance*. Every thing in his tone of voice, in his violent gestures, in his changeable moods, in his impetuosity and intolerance of contradiction, seemed intended for an illustration of the classical *est Deus in nobis*.

In England he thought, perhaps, that an equal, or even more, unqualified admiration entitled him to similar indulgence. His English friends stared at him as he "blustered and sputtered, and screamed like a pig with the knife in his throat." They stared at him and marvelled, and said nothing; but, "after two seasons," they voted him, "in regular course, a bore."

His politics, also, were soon found at variance with those of his earliest friends. As an implacable enemy of the usurper Napoleon, he was greeted in England by men of all parties; but as a foe to Austria, as a victim of the Holy Alliance, and a dreamer of Italian independence, he began to be looked upon as a dangerous utopist, a raving enthusiast, an incurable Radical. The English seem destitute of all power of abstraction—they cannot put themselves in other people's situation. Their veneration for their own free institutions is equally extended to all powers that be. Their horror for revolutions is narrow-minded and indiscriminate. They are for universal conservatism. Gregory XII. of Rome or Nicholas of Russia are as sacred in their eyes as Queen Victoria, her lords, and bishops. A Pole or an Italian aspiring to the enfranchisement of his country is no better than a rebel. No matter how much he may adhere to their own views of Church and State, no matter how stanch an aristocrat he may be at the depth of his heart;—no matter—he is an enemy to the *status quo*—he is an innovator, a conspirator, and it is only among the most ranting Radicals and the most enraged Chartists that he can hope for amity and

brotherhood. How it would be with them if Czar Nicholas could garrison the Tower of London with his wild hordes of Cossacks—if he had power to shut up their printing houses, to break into the sanctuary of their homes, to open their letters at the Post-office (ahem!), to treat them, in short, with some of those blessings with which life is sweetened at Warsaw or Milan—they never, perhaps, thought it worth their while to consider.

One resource only remained still for Foscolo in his literary capacity. It was then in England, in every sense of the word, the golden age of literature, and he brought his talents into a mart where they could not only be fully appreciated, but also turned to a more profitable account than in his own lethargic Italy. The light with which his solitary star shone at Milan or Florence, where it could scarcely fear a competition with the unprincipled Monti, was, indeed, partly eclipsed by the blaze of the glorious cluster which was then at its zenith in the sky. But even by the side of Byron, Scott, Moore, and Hallam, Foscolo could be under no apprehension of being unnoticed or undervalued, and the friendly accolade with which he was saluted at Murray's at once enlisted him in the very first order of the literary characters of the age.

Only it might be questioned how, at first, in his destitution, he could make his talents available to the world and to himself. He was induced to write for some of the periodical works. In English he could not write or think, nor could his Italian be translated. He was, therefore, compelled to lay down his thoughts in French, a language with which he was never thoroughly acquainted, and for which he always evinced a most unequivocal abhorrence; and his compositions, which were, and are still, read with universal admiration, were merely a translation of translation, and had thus undergone a process after which the author himself might have found it difficult to recognise his own primitive conception.

Fortunately for him, Italian literature was then at a premium. Byron, Hobhouse, and a hundred others, had raised it to a height of fashion in which, in later years, it has been superseded by the more fresh and copious productions of German genius. A course of lectures on the literature of Italy, delivered in Italian by Foscolo, in 1823, was worth to its author 1000*l.* in one season. The lecturer gazed at his crowded audience, and pocketed his gold with amazement. He made no allowance for the fortuitous combination of circumstances; he was not aware of the exertions of too partial friends in his behalf. He saw in that brilliant circle of sparkling ladies and perfumed cavaliers only as many docile and willing pupils. He could not, or only too late, comprehend how the attendance of one-half of his auditors was merely the effect of a kindly but undiscerning patronage; of the other half, the result of a poor vanity of appearing to take an interest in what they did not understand. He did not reflect that there were not at the time ten persons in England capable to follow him in his recondite disquisitions, abstruse and inaccessible as they must have been, even independent of the additional difficulty of the language in which they were delivered—and that those few were, perhaps, sufficiently presumptuous to think they needed no schooling from him. He never foresaw that ere the end of the course his splendid circle of hearers would, from sheer weariness and discouragement, have dwindled to those "chosen few" who froze the orator's heart in his bosom, and allowed him no hope of mustering a new audience for the next season. His gold dazzled him. He fancied he had discovered an inexhaustible mine. The next season beheld him a bankrupt and a beggar.

We would not take upon ourselves to assert that Foscolo in all instances showed himself possessed of that common sense without which talent of the very first rank is but a two-edged tool, a dangerous and lamentable gift. The suc-

cess of his lectures, and the other golden dreams of his editorial speculations (in which he was encouraged by eminent booksellers), too early flattered him that his fortune was secured; but we would contend that many a sounder mind would have found it difficult to withstand the seduction of that sudden smile of prosperity. Foscolo was intended for a man of action and strife: ease and fortune unnerved and demoralised him. Had he landed in England obscure and unfriended, had his energies been roused by want and adversity, he would have carved his way through all obstacles, and made his own destiny. As it was, bewildered by a first gleam of ephemeral success, lulled by the calm security of the haven into which Fortune rocked him, he only thought of enjoying an opulence which he fancied he had found ready made. He was soon, and roughly, awakened from his dream indeed, but disappointment was not so easy for him to brook as despondency.

It was fatal, indeed, that the well-meaning liberality and hospitality of the English people should be exercised in favour of a man, who could but misconstrue it into a homage due to the superiority of his mind and character; and it was still more fatal that his friends, either too soon thinking he had been amply provided for, or too easily repulsed by the haughtiness, stubbornness, and, we might almost say, fierceness of the man's manners, with but few exceptions, abandoned him to his evil genius, and suffered him to pine away in want and obscurity, and to die broken-hearted. The building of the *Digamma Cottage*, the sumptuous banquets to his numerous friends, the hundred extravagances of a man embarrassed with the conceit of a sudden affluence of wealth, and which were so soon to lead to distress and humiliation, were but the result of that improvident kindness whose zeal frustrates its object, hastens and aggravates the very evil which it most strenuously strives to avert.

It is possible that Foscolo ill understood the character of

the nation amongst whom he had sought a permanent refuge. "The English are a humane people," he wrote to his sister in 1823, "but will have nothing to do with one who wants bread." And again—"Here poverty is a disgrace which no merit can wash off. It is a crime not punishable by law, but visited with chastisement by the world. Therefore have I hidden myself to conceal my distress. Many of the great men have said and written that *I am the greatest genius among the living.* But indigence would render Homer himself despicable in their eyes."

This idea of English illiberality towards indigent people, so deeply rooted in Foscolo's mind, may, perhaps, have contributed to create in Foscolo's heart a love of display of which he had certainly given no evidence in his own country.

We have so far dwelt on the difficulties Foscolo had to contend with in English society, as this country is still, and may long continue to be, the home of the persecuted wanderers of all parties.

No civilised race, it is certain, shows greater humanity and unobtrusive sympathy towards the unfortunate than the people of these happy islands. The patriotism of an Englishman never renders him unjust to the natives of other countries—never induces him to visit on inoffensive emigrants the injuries with which the country that cast them forth may stand charged towards him.

It is an old saying, but rife with recondite meaning, "that a Frenchman is vain of his country as of something to which he belongs; an Englishman is proud of his own as of something that belongs to him."

No man has certainly more reason to be proud of his country than a native of Britain. He is quite justified in saying, that "were he not an Englishman, he would still be an Englishman." No living being can find fault with him for loving his country too much. To say that he is proud, is not to affirm that he is extravagantly fond of it.

An Englishman has no exaggerated notions of local patriotism, he has no transcendant opinion of the superiority of his race, no very violent attachment to his native soil. It requires no great effort to bring him to confess that the sun may shine elsewhere as brightly as in London. Nay, the dulness of his cloudy atmosphere is even a favourite topic of conversation with him, and notwithstanding his boasted love for the comfort of his English fireside, he seems never so happy as when he can emancipate himself from it—when he can repair to more genial regions, bask in the sunbeams of brighter skies, and abuse the dampness and gloom of his own climate.

He loves his country only as long as it belongs to him. Wherever he is there is Rome. His country is home, and that may be found wherever he can procure comforts and love; at the Chiaia as well as in Piccadilly; on the shores of the Ganges no less than on the banks of the Thames.

The British are the most migratory race in existence; an Englishman is the true citizen of the world. His self-love is only extended to his country as long as the interests of the latter are identified with his own. Were these at any time to extend to a wider community, his patriotism would, perhaps, equally stretch to larger boundaries, and were they for a moment to clash with his own views and wishes, he would without great hesitation separate his cause from that of the land of his birth.

It was thus in conformity with this kind of Indian rubber nationalism that the Saxon did not shrink from an amalgamation with the Celt of Scotland and Ireland, as soon as he found his advantage in the union, notwithstanding his incompatibility of temper and centuries of ruthless warfare; and it was thus likewise, in consequence of this loose application of Cato's principle—

"Son Roma i fidi miei, Roma son io,"

that by an unprecedented, unnatural defection, the world saw, on the other side of the Atlantic, a whole British race

fall off from its fatherland, and organise itself into its bitterest and most irreconcilable enemy.

But it is exactly because there is so much independence of locality, so much personality, in an Englishman's patriotism, that it lies so deeply rooted at the heart's core. As long as his country, its liberties, its honour, its interests, belong to him, and are part of him, he is as warm and jealous in vindicating them as he is active and industrious in walling and fencing his lands and premises.

The English are an eminently rational people. It would be difficult, perhaps, to find another race of men bearing such a height of prosperity with as much meekness and equanimity, none which so long a career of success might have less bewildered and perverted. With an empire of which no one could trace the limits, with a land every inch a garden, with a metropolis in itself a little world, they have risen to no higher degree of self-conceit than if all their miraculous well-being were merely the result of a lucky accident. "Not unto us, O Lord!" exclaims the pious Briton from the depth of his heart, and he feels it.

But although in the abstract, as it were, and in an unguarded moment, you may bring an Englishman to descant without prejudice or partiality on the good or bad qualities of his countrymen—though in a fit of ill humour he will even exaggerate their faults and begrudge them their deserts—though he is apt, for instance, to depreciate their sound and solid understanding, and charge them with obtuseness of spirit, and declare, as it was often my lot to hear, "that the English is the most senseless, most uncivilised, most irreclaimable of all human races;" that under a political and religious misrule, such as Italy is now afflicted with, "it were questionable whether his countrymen would still preserve the countenance and bearing of men, or walk on all-fours like brutes"—still, woe to the stranger who could be ill advised enough to chime in with his strictures, or who would even show that he has heard or noticed them!

—woe to him, above all, if he ventures to avail himself of his hasty concessions to draw disparaging comparisons between those much-abused countrymen and the inhabitants of any other region in the world!

An Englishman does not care to ascertain how far a foreigner is better or worse than himself, only he must not be an Englishman; he must not be like an Englishman. "Your lands," he says, "may be more fertile, may be more skilfully cultivated: only your lands are not my lands. There: this is the boundary-line, and you shall not overstep it. Good fences make good neighbours."

It is to this analogy between love of property and patriotism that I would attribute that undefinable feeling of estrangement by which a foreigner, though he may be tolerated as a neighbour, can, only with time, be looked upon as a brother.

The moment a traveller has crossed the Alps, it must be his own fault if he becomes not—I do not mean politically, but socially—an Italian. No man dreams of addressing him otherwise than by the common appellation of a gentleman, no matter how much the "Signor" may clash with his harsh names and titles, no matter how absurd the combination of "Signor Milord," or "Signor Monsù," may sound to his ears. His "Jack" or "Tom" are rounded into "Giovanni" and "Tommaso," and his very "Smith" and "Brown" do not escape maiming, clipping, and stretching, in a vain attempt at naturalisation. The ball-room, the casino, the accademia, and—provided he be not suspected of being an Austrian spy—every house and heart are equally open to him.

"Will he dance? will he mask? will he bring his own stock into the mart of dull poetry? Welcome, a thousand times welcome! he will be the more popular the more he strives to make himself like other people. Will he court our daughters and sisters? Well; he is a man, let him have his fair chance. He is light-haired and blue-eyed,

and our lasses are sick of dark hair and black eyes. Will he risk his neck in one of our Carbonari conspiracies? Good luck to him! if things come to the worst, his ambassador will take care to get him out of the scrape.

"For a time, to be sure, our *bello idioma* will sound harsh and outlandish in his mouth. For a time the poor novice will oddly offend the *bienséances*, break through the maze of our country-dances, or mistake a disguised *sbirro* for a patriot. Well, what of it? he will learn better in time. We 'll show him; we 'll help him. He will amuse us, and, if he be good-natured, he will laugh with us at his own awkwardness."

By this I do not mean to imply that the Italians are free from national predilections and antipathies. On the contrary, they are absurdly vain of their bygone greatness, and still flatter themselves with the monopoly of those high gifts of genius and valour by which their forefathers repeatedly subdued and civilised the world, and are apt to ascribe their present abjection to the ingratitude and perfidiousness of the ultra-montane. Their resentment against Nelson, for instance, who hung up one of their noblest heroes to the mast of his admiral ship, in open violation of all rights of nations; their execration of Lord Bentinck, who, they say, deceived them with promises of independence; their rancour against the memory of Lord Castlereagh, who, they consider, sold them to Austria at the Congress of Vienna, may render them unjust towards the English in general: but, however they may thus indiscriminately impute to a whole nation the crimes of individuals, their animosity wears off the moment one of their enemies becomes their guest and consents to commune with them. No man will recollect he is a foreigner, unless he disdains to be, or, at least, to live like an Italian: and the most inveterate patriot will readily be brought to declare, "Well, a mighty pleasant fellow that Signor Tonson, after all; you would never take him for an Englishman."

Now this cordial, assimilating disposition, which, more or less, prevails all over the Continent, is diametrically opposite, I think, to that English repulsiveness, if it may be so called, which prevents a foreigner, even after many years' residence, from finding himself perfectly at home in this country.

An Englishman travelling abroad becomes gradually reconciled, though he seldom communes with the natives of the various countries he visits. If he cannot always respect, he learns to sympathise with them; he is a diligent observer, and soon knows how to appreciate the true causes which have rendered them such as they are. It is only in his own island that he would fain not see them, especially if, in a mistaken effort to please him, they presume to Anglicise themselves, to bring themselves to relish roast-beef and Yorkshire pudding, horse-racing, prize fighting, hunting, betting, and swearing.

It is when you step on his ground, or encroach on what he considers his privilege, that he will be anxious to draw his boundary-line, and intimate that so far you shall go and no farther.

The English are deficient in neither benevolence nor hospitality. A well-behaved stranger finds, properly speaking, no circle inaccessible, no house inexorably shut against him. More than eighty years ago, Alfieri found London a more sociable place, so far as admission into private houses could make it so, than Paris. The company of foreign gentlemen is not only tolerated, but even solicited. They are invariably received with studied politeness and officiousness. Every one coming into contact with them keeps a constant look-out on his own behaviour; under the vague conviction that a greater refinement of manners prevails on the other side of the Channel, every one seems ashamed of that off-handed, easy, but warm and hearty manner which is so peculiar to the English. Every one,

in short, and to use a common phrase, deems it his duty "to Frenchify himself in sight of a Frenchman."

This proceeding is so uniformly adopted among all well-bred Englishmen, the illusion is so complete, that travellers who reside only a short time in London, and only skim the surface of things, will oftentimes go back with a thorough conviction that foreigners are perfectly idolised in this country. It requires the experience of several seasons, an intercourse with every class of people, a long residence among the unsophisticated and primitive country gentry, and, above all, an intimate acquaintance with English literature, to become aware that, in the mind of many a Briton, mankind is divided into two races, essentially different in nature, habits, and principles, from time immemorial at war, and, if not actually hostile to each other, at least utterly unsusceptible of assimilation—the English and French, or, to use synonymous expressions, the British and Foreign.

There have been, and are many reasons, every one must be willing to acknowledge, besides the natural position of their islands, tending to engender, in the heart of the

"Divisi toto orbe Britanni,"

this sense of isolation and estrangement. The time was when every man's hand was raised against them. To say nothing of what are called their natural enemies immediately beyond the waters, and of the centuries of bloodshed by land and sea, from Crecy to Waterloo, which of the European nations has not caused England long hours of danger and anxiety? The name of Italy is in this country associated with all that long series of civil dissensions and foreign intrigues which ushered in the great event of the Reformation, when every traveller with black eyes and black whiskers was received with the dreaded cry of "No Popery," and ran imminent danger of being torn

to pieces by the populace as a Jesuit in disguise. The Dutch, it is yet remembered, long, and not always unsuccessfully, crossed the Britons' path in their colonies, and, by fair means and foul, contended for the supremacy of the seas; and the good countryman viewing the *lions* in the Tower is still shown the very fetters and manacles with which the bloody-minded Spaniards of the invincible Armada intended to convey the free-born British, handcuffed and collared, to their bagnios in Cadiz.

It is true, from these and from all successive struggles England came out triumphant, and the opposition of her rivals only hastened her onward march towards her present elevation; but the English are not so easily to be dazzled by the glitter of glory, as to be indifferent to the lavish waste of blood with which it was purchased, or to thank the foe whose stubborn resistance occasioned it.

Besides, these same enemies, beaten as they all have been in a hundred fields, never cease to return to the charge. Here, it is the Prince de Joinville, at the head of a fleet of war-steamers, threatening to set the Thames on fire; there, the "old chimera" of a pope, under the new disguises of Puseyism and Repeal, setting Oxford and Ireland on fire; elsewhere it is a German Zoll-Verein, conspiring to set all the mills in Manchester, Bolton, and Nottingham, on fire; and even Poland, Spain, and Italy, who can do no other mischief, send to these coasts emigrants as numerous as shoals of herrings or swarms of locusts, to eat up all the bread which the English cannot well spare them, and rewarding the hospitality they receive by turning a pair of imperial trousers into a shirt of Nessus, to set the limbs of England's beloved guest and visitor on fire.

In spite of all these old and recent grudges, however, I would not undertake to affirm, that the feelings an Englishman harbours in his heart towards foreigners amount to positive hatred. Indeed, he has too much of the milk

of human nature in his composition to give way to that ignoble passion, though the name be so constantly in his mouth. It is only esteem and confidence; it is that open, frank, brotherly sympathy, which looks upon mankind as one family, and is ever ready to wave all difference resulting from accident of birth; it is only the love of man to man, on a perfect footing of equality, that a stranger so seldom succeeds to secure in this country.

Not many, I feel assured, would at the present day suffer the unnatural words of Lord Nelson to fall from their lips, "that their blood boils in sight of a Frenchman." Not a few, however, would sympathise with that honest countryman, who, being asked for his passport abroad, stubbornly contended, that he was "an Englishman and no foreigner;" words of characteristic import and uncommon sublimity, which remind us of that ancient sage, who daily offered up his prayers to Heaven, "that he was born a Greek and no Barbarian."

An Englishman will readily—sometimes too readily—admit that his neighbours excel him in many things—in many, at least, of those minor accomplishments of the fine arts for which, in his heart of hearts, he entertains a sovereign contempt: for instance, that the French make better hair-dressers and dancing-masters, the Italians better fiddlers and confectioners; nay, his partiality towards foreign artists in these matters is so decided, that native talent is not unfrequently driven to the desperate scheme of divesting itself of its homely English appellation, and to reappear on the field under a *nom-de-guerre* in *ini*, *etti*, or *anti*. But to bring him to confess that, as the same sun calls forth every where a various, but an equally rich vegetation, so it must every where warm the human breast with analogous feelings; that uprightness, honour, and truth, and all that are so emphatically called the *sterling* virtues are no more essentially the privilege of the Anglo Saxon race than the gold and silver with which *sterling* pieces are coined—all

this is an act of justice not to be readily expected, and which must be the work of longer discipline.

Travelling will do him no good: so long, at least, as it consists of a harum-scarum race over the Continent, carrying his bed and tea-kettle in his travelling-carriage for fear of French mosquitoes, frogs, and garlic, shunning all intercourse with what are called the natives, and studying foreign manners in the works of Mrs. Trollope and the Countess of Blessington.

Neither is the occasional visit or permanent residence of a few continental emigrants likely to establish a better understanding between the people of this country and the continental. No Frenchman or Italian who can help it leaves his native country; and the exaggerated horrors of its dreary climate, and of its appalling expensiveness of living, deters the most enterprising traveller from including even London in his six months' tour of Europe. So that, with the exception of a few poor artists and political refugees, the great mass of foreign artists haunting the dingy purlieus of Leicester and Golden Squares is made up of adventurers of the very worst description—from the German baron or Roman prince, who cross the channel bent on matrimonial speculation, to the runaway bankrupts and pickpockets, flocking by thousands into this blessed land of no passports.

Under such circumstances is it surprising, or indeed unreasonable, if honest John Bull feels to some extent uneasy, if he draws himself up, buttons his coat, and secures his handkerchief in his pocket, at the near approach of a foreigner? Yet even under such circumstances he acts towards them with exemplary justice, kindness, and forbearance. Not only does he open his door to the outcasts of all countries and of all parties with a liberality worthy of Rome and Venice in their happiest days—not only does he never allow himself one word of insult or reproach, but he does every thing in his power to dissemble his invincible

repugnance and suspicion, and meets them with a faint and dim, but not insincere smile of welcome.

Only he does try to signalise them by as many peculiar marks as lie in his power. He takes care never to designate them by the national appellations of mister or esquire, however hard his vocal organs may be tasked to pronounce the *mounsheer* or *signio*, which must needs be applied to every living being landing on his coasts, whether he happens to come from Lapland or from the land of the Hottentots.

I will not go so far as to assert that he would like to assign them a peculiar quarter, as the Israelites were once confined to their Jewry, or oblige them to wear a distinct dress; especially as nature has already provided the great indelible characteristic by which nations are still kept asunder, and which renders every other natural or artificial barrier superfluous.

His language—one of the simplest and easiest in its forms and construction, but the pronunciation of which baffles the most musical ear and the nimblest tongue—is cherished by an Englishman as his most inalienable property. He is, indeed, keenly alive to the slightest deviation from his arbitrary rules of orthoepy; his loyalty is dreadfully shocked by hearing the Queen's English murdered; and every false inflection and accentuation, a *th* too thick or too thin, inflicts exquisite torture on his fastidious acoustic nerves; it does, indeed, annoy him not a little to be compelled to talk several notes above his natural key, to convey his meaning to a man, whose imperfect knowledge of his language he seems determined to mistake for deafness; but he is, nevertheless, by no means sorry that one test remains which enables him at once to single out an alien the moment he opens his mouth, and to say to him, in the words of Walter Scott's Ulrica, "Thou needest say no more: men know a fox by the train, and a Jewess by her tongue."

Strange to say, once the important fact ascertained that the man he accosts is a native of another land, the Englishman deals with him, not only with impartial justice, but even with magnanimous indulgence. Actuated by the persuasion that the stranger was born and brought up in a community, whose social and moral institutions are, if not quite "a mass of rottenness and corruption," as his Sunday paper assures him, at least oddly at variance with those his own island is blessed with, the Briton looks upon him as a non-responsible being; his personal foibles, follies, and vices, are looked upon as national peculiarities. A foreigner's passport is a patent of utter impunity for all kinds of minor offences.

Does an Englishman burden himself with a profusion of gold chains, eye-glasses, and other jingling gewgaws?—is his face bristling with huge mustaches and whiskers? He is a fop and a tiger. But does a Frenchman allow himself similar absurdities? He is—only a foreigner; such is the fashion in their country. Does an Englishman by too rare a luck always happen to turn up the trump card?—does he run away, forgetting to settle his tailor's bill? He is a blackleg and a swindler. But is an Italian guilty of an equally dishonest behaviour? He is—only a foreigner; that is the way in their country. And a foreigner who is not a fop or a blackleg, a tiger or a swindler, is an anomaly, an exception, which only proves the soundness of the rule.

This sounds rather strange, and, coming as it does from a foreigner's lips, may be looked upon as unwarranted exaggeration and unprovoked impertinence. But follow me a few moments into English society, and see if at every step a stranger does not meet with marks of a similar condescension; if at every step he is not reminded that he is a privileged being, not amenable to the common rules of honesty and decorum.

Ask that lady her opinion of Mr. M——'s musical performance.

"Well, I can hardly say. I hate to see a gentleman at the piano, it looks so unmanly!—for an Englishman, I mean. Of course, I rather like it in a foreigner."

Another lady asks you to favour the company with one of your songs.

"Sorry not to oblige you, madam; only I never sing."

"Dear me! You an Italian, and never sing!" Then muttering between her teeth, "An Italian not sing! What else in the world can he do?"

For, after all, women, as they are the most ingenuous, so are they also the most communicative part of mankind; and more is to be learnt of the real disposition of men's minds, from half an hour's conversation with a woman, than from twenty years' dealing with her husband. I have never forgotten a young lady, pretty, and, as it was thought, well bred, who, on being introduced to an Italian, asked him more than three times in an hour—"Pray signio, can you tell me the English of *Non mi ricordo?*" What on earth she could mean the poor signor was, fortunately, at a loss to understand.

Wonderful association of ideas! The sight of an unknown stranger called up into the lively fancy of the young lady all the particulars of that melancholy trial of Queen Caroline. . . . . How astonished would the young lady have been had she known that, after all, the arrant liar who rendered those few Italian syllables proverbial in this country, was no more a native of Italy than the pope is of China, belonging, in fact, to that mongrel population of Barbary, which, although speaking Italian, and most of them originally descended from Italian settlers, can no more be called Italians than a Mississipian cut-throat is to be styled an Englishman.

It is not, then, positive ill will; it is an indefinable re-

pugnance of temper, a depreciation resulting from a hasty and illiberal generalisation on a few unfavourable specimens, which prevents the generality of English people from ever looking upon a foreigner with unqualified esteem and unreserved trust and affection. And even these feelings are so scrupulously concealed, that it is only from some involuntary slip of the tongue, from some expression of which they do not themselves conceive the offensiveness, that one can get at the veritable state of their minds.

Ask His Grace the Duke of —— why he desired his friends never to introduce a foreigner into his house. He has no particular objection to them, no fault to find with their creeds or politics, with their social and moral principles. Not he! What is all that to His Grace? Only, "they spit, and blow their noses so unmercifully, and they take such an abominable deal of snuff, and they eat so voraciously, and live altogether as if soap and tooth-brushes were unknown luxuries among them."

One of these practices, so obnoxious to the liberal-minded duke, was adverted to by *The Times* newspaper, which, not many days ago, suggested to the members of the Oxford convocation the propriety of appointing English teachers of foreign languages, in preference to French or Italian professors, who could only "talk broken English, and take snuff, for the amusement of the undergraduates."

Again: Ask Dr. Busybody, the honourable member for B——n to present your petition against Government for having your letter spied into at the Post Office. He disbelieves you. The thing is unheard of; so "essentially un-English!" But, on the morrow, you inform him that an English—we beg his pardon—a Scotch baronet loudly avowed that he has issued a warrant to that effect.

"Ah, well!" replies the senator, with great candour, "he may thank his stars you are a foreigner!"

It was thus at the time of the execution of Caracciolo,

on board Nelson's ship, that, after a short murmuring, the sailors consoled themselves by observing, that it was "only a foreign prince that was strung up, after all."

"Un-English!" Any thing that is base, false, and dastardly, is unceremoniously styled un-English. Short daggers, sword-canes, and other instruments of assassination, we are told in a newspaper, are altogether outlandish contrivances. The very ingenious samples of workmanship in that style, glittering from a hundred shop-windows in the Strand, or Piccadilly, are there exhibited merely for the supply of foreign markets; and half the ruffians who are occasionally executed at the Old Bailey commit their murders with their fists, or with a piece of ordnance.

"Un-English!" It is very pleasant to monopolise all moral worth for our own country, and stigmatise every vile action as a plant of exotic growth. People will easily give us credit for qualities which we boldly assume; and till the Duke of Wellington asserted, and the Committees of both Houses proved, that every Secretary of State, ever since the reign of Queen Anne, enjoyed and exercised the same privilege which has raised so much obloquy against Sir James Graham, the proceedings of the secret office were a flagrant evidence of the extent to which hypocrisy can personify virtue.

But, after all, it is in the literature of the country, as I have hinted, that the true national feelings will most obviously show themselves.

The odious parts of the cowardly bravo, of the treacherous stabber and poisoner, no less than of the mean fortune-hunter, of the heartless courtesan, are by many a worthy author severally appointed to the different members of the European family, in accordance with those rules of art by which the fox in ancient apologues is always made to play the part of the swindler, and the cat that of the traitor.

The whole of English literature breathes this un-

generous spirit; contrary in this to the feeling that generally pervades every page of German and Italian productions; where, although occasionally ridiculed, the English is the character to which every highest quality is invariably attributed, somewhat, perhaps, after the views of Tacitus, who exaggerated the virtues of the ancient Germans, to upbraid, by the contrast, the degeneracy of his Roman contemporaries; for, be it understood, it is not by flattering their vanity, but by scourging their vices, that we can improve the morals of our countrymen. It is not by proclaiming how much better we are than our neighbours that we can prove to the world, or even to ourselves, that we are good.

It would certainly be wrong to form an estimate of English feelings from the intemperate writings of such authors as I have alluded to, or to quarrel with poets and novelists for accommodating facts and characters to suit their designs; although it cannot be denied that the generality of readers are more than moderately influenced by similar misrepresentations, and that the works which attract universal attention must, to some extent, be in unison with the national character.

But I will only take the words of one of the mildest and soberest of men; of whom it may be said that, different from some of his successors, who feel with their heads, he thought with his heart—the words of Walter Scott, by whom, I think, few Britons would object to see their national feelings represented. "These foreigners," he says, "I do not like them. I hate fine waistcoats, and breast-pins upon dirty shirts. I detest the impudence that pays a stranger compliments, and harangues about an author's works in his own house, which is surely ill breeding." And, after thus indulging his ill humour in this strain against the whole race, he singles out one of the noblest subjects of the last generation, poor Ugo Foscolo, whom he hated, because he was "ugly as a baboon."

I love to repeat these severe remarks upon Foscolo, because they contrast rather strangely with the almost idolatrous regard his own countrymen evince towards his memory. There was, indeed, no lack of detractors who endeavoured to obscure Foscolo's fair fame, and who, by their cowardly attacks, aggravated the miseries of his exile during his lifetime. Up to the year 1814, Foscolo was, by the universality of his countrymen, pointed at as the beau-ideal of a patriotic hero. Warm friends and bitter enemies he had; but these latter, such as Monti, and other literati of the old school, could only meet him on the literary arena. As a man and as a citizen, the indomitable spirit of the Cisalpine soldier-poet had power to crush a whole host of those base, time-serving court minions. Yet, after his departure from Italy, when his disasters ought to have commanded the veneration of all parties and silenced all opposition, foul doubts and obvious calumnies were raised against the unhappy exile, which, although silently belied by the instinctive sense of equity of the multitude, still could not be openly, palpably confuted in a country where the discussion of such subjects was matter of high treason.

These aspersions on Foscolo's name, which had never been fully credited, have been at last satisfactorily disproved, by a recent publication of inedited letters and other important papers, under the care of Mr. Mazzini, in London *. Mr. Mazzini had long cherished a hope of being able to give us a life of Foscolo "free from the errors which have arisen from neglect and ignorance, and to redeem his memory from the suspicions which the jealousy and servility of his rivals had raised against him." A great number of papers, tending to illustrate the private and literary character of Foscolo, still remain inedited, in

* "Scritti Politici Inediti di Ugo Foscolo, raccolti a documentarne la vita e i tempi," Lugano, 1844.

Mr. Mazzini's hands; the volume alluded to being only meant as a vindication of his political character.

"They charged him," sums up Mr. Mazzini, "with having fled from Italy for debts, or because he had sold his connivance to the Austrian Government, and offered the cooperation of his pen to sanction its power and promote its views; and as his agreement with the hated Austrian rulers began to be bruited at Milan, he withdrew himself from the indignation of his countrymen, who would not have failed to visit his apostasy with the opprobrious names of 'traitor' and 'spy.' They accused him with having, in order to acquire fame among strangers, dictated to an Englishman (Sir John Hobhouse) a book, severe in its censure of others, immodest in its praises of himself; then, with having forged two manuscript letters of Petrarch, which he imposed upon Lord Holland as autographs, with a view to extort money from his patron and suffrage from the public; finally, with having suppressed, through menace or bribery of the English Government, a work on Parga, written at the instigation of some of the exiles from that country."

Accusations of such a nature, directed against a man of so headlong, and, we may add, of so vain a disposition as Foscolo, would of themselves have fallen into oblivion, and certainly never survived him, had not the daily increase of the poet's fame roused the animadversion of some mean spirits, envious even of the honours tributed to the memory of the dead. The documents laid before the public by Mr. Mazzini leave no doubt on Foscolo's utter blamelessness, and only give us reason to regret that Foscolo should be so much more alive to such paltry attacks, than would seem consistent with the dignity of a truly great man.

We shall not quote one word from Foscolo's "Apology;" we shall not enter into the details of his enemy's accusations, nor even write down the name of these latter: we shall only deplore the condition of a country, like Italy,

where men gifted with high intellectual faculties can find time to indulge such rancours and wranglings, and where public opinion is not allowed to come to a definitive verdict, even on the sepulchre of the dead.

The English, meanwhile, according to Foscolo's own testimony, whatever they might think of his oddities, did full justice to his uprightness of principle. "It is my consistency of opinion," says he, "whether right or wrong in all my deeds and writings which secured their esteem in my behalf; for, in this country, political versatility is visited with utter infamy, neither can talent, wealth, nor rank in any manner reconcile public opinion to it * * * * among these people imposture has no chance of success."

But these interesting documents are not the only production for which the world is indebted to Mr. Mazzini's industry.—It is known to all persons interested in Italian literature that Foscolo had assumed the enterprise of a new edition of Dante, and that he had consecrated his last years to the accomplishment of his vast scheme. The work was left, at his death, in the hands of an English publisher who had already lost too much by Foscolo's speculations to venture on the publication of a work which he believed unfinished. An Italian bookseller in London, at the suggestion of Mr. Mazzini and others, purchased Foscolo's manuscripts for 400*l.*, a sum which the English publisher had advanced to Foscolo as a remuneration for his labours, and the work appeared at last in a neat and correct edition —a monument of Italian devotion to the memory of Dante and his commentator*.

Allusion has already been made to Foscolo's Discourse on the Text of the Divine Comedy, in the first volume of this work: that portion of Foscolo's labours had already been published both in London, and at Lugano, in Switzerland, previous to the author's death. The inedited part of

* "La Commedia di Dante Alighieri, illustrata da Ugo Foscolo;" 4 vols. 8vo. London, Rolandi, 1842–1844.

the recent publication consists of the *Commedia*, with the variations of more than two hundred codes, and of all the previous editions of the poem; the whole compared and sifted with a minute accuracy, a discernment, a depth of criticism and erudition, truly astonishing in that quick-tempered and impetuous man.

Such was Foscolo, when, to use his own words, "his English friends had turned him—the Bard of the Graces—into an antiquarian and grammatist." The poet had sunk into the mere critic and essayist. The seven years of Foscolo's exile were lost to Italy, nor did his contributions to the Edinburgh Review, or his Essay on Petrarch, add more than a drop to the ocean-like literature of the country that had offered him his last resting-place.

Meanwhile, it were well if all Foscolo's writings were brought into light, and Mr. Mazzini fulfilled the whole of his engagement with the public; we are yet in need of a biography of Foscolo. The hasty memoirs published by Count Pecchio, soon after the poet's death, have already fallen into oblivion, and it was well for their author that such was their fate. Pecchio's character was at the very antipodes with that of him he so equivocally styled his friend. The count was a good, easy sort of a man, the most unfit to comprehend such a mind as Foscolo's. The flippant air of self-sufficiency, the half-sneering, half-pitying tone with which—from the lap of comfort and luxury, his alliance with a wealthy Unitarian wife afforded him—he looked on the fretting of a great soul brought to bay by adversity, is more galling to the friends of Foscolo's name than the aspersions of his bitterest traducers *.

Let another attempt on the subject be made. Let a kindred spirit tell us of Foscolo's deeds and writings, of his wanderings and sufferings, nay, of his errors and follies, with truth, indeed, but with that regard and forbearance,

* Vita di Ugo Foscolo, scritta da Giuseppe Pecchio. London, 1827.

with that veneration which fills an upright mind in the presence of a noble and eminently unfortunate being.

Sad as Foscolo's condition in the land of his forced adoption might be, it was hardly to be compared to the fate of others no less generous though more obscure, among his fellow-sufferers. Not a few of the Italian exiles, chiefly those who had been trained to a military life, such as the high-minded Santa Rosa, Basetti, and a hundred more of Napoleon's veterans, as if unequal to the trials of the life of want and inactivity that awaited them in the land of refuge, sought a speedy and not inglorious issue to their misery on the battle-field. Italian blood has been shed for what was deemed the cause of freedom, in Spain in 1823; in Greece in the following years; and again in France, Spain, and Africa since 1830. Even at the present day every mail from South America bears evidence of the heroism of Italian volunteers. Those refugees who were too hastily charged with being chary of their life for their country's sake, have belied their accusers by the eagerness with which they lavished it, not unfrequently in behalf of unworthy and thankless confederates. The distinguished patriots that have fallen in foreign wars since 1814, could they but rise again from their gory beds, would make up no inefficient legion for Italy, were her destinies ever to hang on the chances of a field day.

Meanwhile other more disdainful spirits, like Count Bianco or Luciano Giglioli, sought a speedier deliverance from the irksomeness of an exile's life by self-murder; others pined away in helpless despondency, and died of sheer home-sickness; whilst others, again, still more melancholy to relate! met with an untimely end in ignoble brawls with a foreign populace, or died by each other's hand in unbrotherly disputes of a private character.

Whatever may be said of the antipathy lurking in most genuine English hearts against every thing foreign,—and I have fearlessly given my views on the subject to a greater

length and in a lighter tone, perhaps, than might suit the general object and character of this work,—England is still the best, the only country for all the unfortunate who have lost their own. In spite of the just cautiousness and instinctive coldness by which it is qualified, the reception a foreign wanderer meets with on these shores is, at least, disinterested and free; once plunged into the vast tide of English life, he moves unconfined, screened from observation by the very insignificance to which he is immediately reduced: he is, at least, his own master; and if Government offices, Parliament, the University, the Army, and Navy, are inexorably closed against him, he is allowed a free competition almost in every other respect. The air of true liberty recreates him; here, for the first time, he assumes the erect and proud walk of a freeman; he learns to bear his thoughts fearlessly written on his brow; and he knows, in spite of their innate distance and reserve, how fully he may rely on the justice of his hosts—how firmly he can depend on their regard and good-will, if ever he has the good fortune to win them.

It was otherwise in France. The paltry pension which Louis Philippe insidiously tendered to the Italian refugees in 1831, was turned into an instrument of oppression and corruption. Under the most frivolous pretext, and even without pretext, political guests were dealt with as prisoners; they were, like common malefactors, banished from Paris, Lyons, or Marseilles; from all large towns where they might have aspired to useful and honourable employment. Condemned to the dulness and idleness of provincial life, in some of the meanest places in the kingdom, such as Mâcon or Rhodez, degraded by an amalgamation with runaway swindlers and pickpockets, whom, either from ignorance or malice, the French government palmed upon them; ever in dread and suspicion of the spies that were purposely admitted to the same stipend with them; distracted by the petty ill feelings too naturally springing

up amongst companions in misfortune, and too naturally also, festering into envenomed feuds and breaking out into open hostilities in their weary hours of forced inactivity, the Italian refugees in France were subjected to a mental anguish, by the side of which the bodily tortures of Spielberg were mere child's play. The bloody riots at Mâcon, and atrocious assassinations at Rhodez,—I say it without hesitation,—were only the result of the base treachery of a government who offered them subsistence with a view to degrade them, to drive them to excesses that might best discredit them and their cause in the eyes of their countrymen—in the eyes of Europe.

Not a few, however, of the Italian exiles who had the good fortune to evade the dangerous bounty of Louis Philippe, and made their way unnoticed into the capital or any of the large towns, have met with such success in public life as no foreigner could aspire to in England without the loudest animadversion. The brilliant career of Count Rossi in French diplomacy would be an absolute impossibility in this country. From an obscure professor at Geneva, where chance brought him into frequent intercourse with Guizot and others of the *Doctrinaire* leaders, now at the head of the government, Rossi made his way into the French House of Deputies and to the peerage; and will only return from his important mission to Rome, to be trusted with some of the most responsible offices in the government.

His countrymen, it is true, will not soon forgive him the heartless apostasy by which, after the brightest display of talents and energies in behalf of his country's cause, during the pontificate of Gregory XVI., he made himself, at the court of Gregory's successor, the instrument of the double-dealing and perfidy of his royal master. Count Rossi, however, is now only a Frenchman; a slave to the party that raised him from nothing. No man can serve two masters; and he is sold, body and soul, to the most un-

principled enemy to all that is good and honourable in human feelings. No patriotism can be proof against ambition. It is not every man will cling to the cause that God has forsaken. Time and absence estrange the worldly-minded and selfish from their fellow-sufferers, till they learn to disavow them. Napoleon ceased to be a man when he ascended the throne. The Count only needed a French peerage and the title of Excellency to forswear his country and become its most dangerous foe.

That the highest honours and dignities are opened to a foreign refugee in France, and that it is possible for him so thoroughly to identify himself with his adopted country, as to be amply indemnified for the loss of his own, is nevertheless a glaring fact; and it rather strangely contrasts with the narrow-minded jealousy of a nation, otherwise just and generous, which not only excludes foreigners from public life, but is still murmuring against the preferment of an Italian to an honourable employment, one of great trust, undoubtedly, but purely of a literary character; notwithstanding his well-acknowledged abilities, notwithstanding his signal services, and unwearied zeal and devotion.

CHAPTER III.

MANZONI.

Influence of Ultra-montane Literature—Romanticism—Manzoni—Religious Tendencies of his Works—Character of his Tragedies—Of his Novel—Extracts from the "Promessi Sposi"—From the "Adelchi"—From his "Inni Sacri"—"The Fifth of May."

From all that has been said of the state of men's minds in Italy, previous to the accession of Pius IX. to the pontifical throne, it results that, if letters ever had a holy, redeeming mission on earth, such must certainly be the office which they were called to perform in that country, in our days.

Historical and philosophical works; periodical and fugitive literature, though closely harassed by the manifold engines of tyranny, yet all displayed a tendency to the development of new energies, all cooperated to urge on with a new impulse the whole social order, to actuate, to incarnate Thought.

To search into the most obscure annals of history, and reveal the glories of the land; to derive from that past lustre a feeling of shame for present disgrace, a ray of hope for future resurrection; to spread a chivalrous, devotional, enterprising spirit, inviting men to think, to struggle, to suffer; to combat individualism, and all that tends to isolate man, and make him forgetful of what he owes to society; to exhibit in dark colours, dark even to exaggeration, the evils of division and servitude, and cry, Italy! Italy!—such was the mission of that new school of litera-

ture to which the vague denomination of *Romantic* had been generally applied.

Though some of its promoters might be misled by a party spirit, by excessive zeal, or by short-sighted prejudices, there was not a writer of any credit in Italy who did not conscientiously exert his powers for the improvement of the human race: none that did not actively seek the welfare of his country.

Letters had resumed their place in society.

As, however, on the one hand, no idle, academical or Arcadian literature would any longer be countenanced by public opinion; and, on the other, literature of life was stifled and crushed by the agents of power, the consequence was, that uncertainty and silence prevailed. There was only one string in the poet's harp to which Italian hearts could respond, and that was the very string which it was high treason to strike.

This state of perplexity had also been increased by the revolution which the rules of taste had recently undergone all over Europe.

As soon as, after the fall of Napoleon, the abating of the revolutionary flood offered some ground for studious pursuits, the German literature, ripened among the preceding commotions, appeared on the tops of the Alps in all the freshness of youth.

Old Italy, exhausted with the productions of five centuries, seemed inclined to rest under the shade of her laurels, to survey the youthful efforts of happier nations; like a superannuated wrestler, with downcast brow and folded arms, looking upon the feats of his disciples, from the head of the circus.

But the believers of Young Italy could not be as easily persuaded to inaction. They turned to Germany, to England, and to Spain; to the East and to the North. The sphere of studies was prodigiously extended. Shakspeare and Milton never read or never understood; Garcilasso and

Lope de Vega dead and buried in men's memory; Brahminic verses, Icelandic legends, Gothic epopées, unknown lands, the Niebelungen-lied, the Bible, the Koran, were now placed by the side of Homer and Dante, of Sophocles and Alfieri; while Goethe and Schiller, Byron and Scott, Lamartine and Victor Hugo, sent every day a supply of new models. It was a literary fair of all ages and countries.

In the midst of that recent affluence, a young enthusiast, with a mind imbued with the maxims of freedom and patriotism common in Italy to all who were educated on this side of 1800, arose to give, by his influence, a name to the literary reform that was rapidly advancing around him —Manzoni.

The publication of his first verses was an auspicious event in his country. Trampled, divided, reft of her birth-right of freedom, Italy still put forth her claims to her birth-right of intellect. One bond of union yet remained. The language that Dante created was still the organ of living thought. Italian bosoms still glowed with the flame of god-like inspiration. Out of twenty-four millions of degraded bondmen, the unexhausted land still numbered a poet.

It is not to every country that God vouchsafes such a boon. See Russia and America intent upon the invasion of continents; Spain raving with faction and misrule, patching and tinkering her constitution, crushing to-day the idol of yesterday; France, fencing her new-born cowardice with Chinese walls and lines of *liberticide* citadels; England and Germany cavilling about Puseyism and Rongeism, making their father's faith a bed of thorns and a cause of offence. To Italy alone a poet was born. With the sound of gyves and manacles the bard's strain still mingled: the sacred strain redeeming, regenerating.

A poet! why, "every year and month sends forth a new one." The generation that sat down on the blood-

stained fields of Napoleon, could boast of scores of warblers, many of them swans and phœnixes, birds of the rarest plumage. Against that solitary Manzoni, England, France and Germany, nay, Sweden and Denmark, can muster their hundreds. But, alas! of such birds there can be no flock. Their very multitude sinks the bark that should waft them to immortality, and more so the bulk of their works.

"The age discovers they are not the true ones." Men mistrust the genius that is ever equal to his daily task; the author who stoops to mere book manufactory. The door-keeper to the Temple of Fame is bewildered by the long appendage to the name of a candidate for admission, even as the honest Spanish inn-keeper shut his door in the hidalgo's face, frightened at the long string of his titles, and protesting he had no accommodation for so numerous a caravan.

A poet's worth is only to be valued by his influence over his fellow-beings. Let the heartless age sneer at it as it lists, the poet's work is a mission. He is a seer, a God's messenger, or otherwise his footsteps will soon vanish from earth's surface.

It would, perhaps, hardly be just to place Manzoni by the side of such vast intellects as Scott or Goethe. Yet, who has not heard the former contemptuously dismissed as "an over moral twaddler;" or the other classed among the authors "that are more praised than loved, more read than understood?" The Italians are more unanimous and consistent in their reverence for sovereign minds. Manzoni's reputation suffers no abatement; and that because his heart and soul have spoken, and because he knew how to hold his tongue when heart and soul were exhausted.

It is consoling to see it. An author who does not sit down to his table, saying, "What shall I write next? who will furnish a subject? how shall I stretch my canvas to a three-volume novel? or else, how shall I compound with

my publisher? or how fill up my twelve monthly numbers? but rather one whose subject haunts and fatigues him day and night; possesses him like a demon; weighs him down like a woman in labour, brings him to his writing-desk even as to a child-bed; and leaves him, after delivery, weary, overpowered, in a dread of the renewal of his travail.

The mercantile spirit of the age has not yet, thank Heaven! reached Italy. That country has only one living author, and his works do not exceed a moderate-sized octavo. Reviews and newspapers have done their work upon him, nor can his fame rise and fall like the mercury in a weather-glass. Manzoni has outlived his own destinies, and, properly speaking, belongs to the past; so that, as we have said with regard to Botta, in our views of his genius, and of the influence of his writings, we may look upon him as one whose career has reached its close, and treat him even as posterity deals with the dead.

The Restoration of 1814 found Manzoni in the prime of life*. A mild, meek, contemplative spirit, he looked with horror on the scene of desolation around him. We know no particulars respecting Manzoni's private career. We have heard him described, we hardly could state on what authority, as a gentle, almost feminine being, affected by constitutional timidity, afraid to remain alone in the dark.

* Alessandro Manzoni, born in 1784, at Milan, where he passed the greatest part of his life. He belongs to a noble Lombard family. His mother was Giulia Beccaria, daughter of the famous author, "Dei Delitti e delle Pene." The "Inni Sacri" were published in 1810; "Carmagnola," 1820; "Adelchi," 1823; "Il Cinque Maggio," 1823; "I Promessi Sposi," 1827; "Sulla Morale Cattolica," 1835; "Storia della Colonna Infame," 1842. This last was written in illustration of some passage in the novel of "The Betrothed," and belongs to the same epoch. Except as a work of erudition, it has little to interest the reader. It was published with an illustrated edition of the novel, in which Manzoni took the minutest pains to alter the words nearly in every line of the original text. A work of pedantry undertaken to little purpose, and for which the world owes him no great thanks.

It is also whispered that he was in earliest youth tormented by doubt; by an inquisitive solicitude, which had well-nigh undermined all belief in revealed truth, when travelling once in the south of France, he chanced to hear—we do not remember whether at Nismes or Toulouse—a French preacher, by whose eloquence he was so mightily struck, that, suing for his acquaintance, and taking a nearer view of the subject, in which he had hitherto seen nothing but chaos and darkness, he was completely won back to the faith of his fathers, and vowed to exert such powers of intellect as Heaven had granted him to the rescue of others.

It was, then, with such feelings uppermost in his mind, that Manzoni looked on the havoc wrought upon Europe by the French Revolution. He beheld the great edifice that eighteen centuries had reared, now miserably trodden in the dust. Not a relic, not a vestige of religious belief; not a word of controversy did he hear, no spirit of party or sectarianism. The governments of the Restoration, intent upon removing the traces of revolutionary ravages, had re-raised and propped up a clumsy fabric, which they called the Church: of the spirit of Christianity not a word was said. It was no longer Protestant latitudinarianism, it was not Jacobinic philosophy Catholicism had now to contend with. It had met a far greater enemy—a dreary spectre, weaponless, passionless, mute—bidding no defiance, declining close engagement—overcome by no disaster, elated by no success—gorgon-like, chilling, petrifying—Christianity was perishing in Italy from sheer spiritual inertia. To the age of cavil and sarcasm, of outrage and blasphemy, had succeeded that of utter irreclaimable scepticism.

Manzoni saw it. He determined to grapple with the monster. By the warm breath of poetic inspiration he would thaw the chill of despair that hardened the hearts of his countrymen against God.

The cause seemed a hopeless one, and he stood quite alone

in his championship. Foscolo, Alfieri, were, at the utmost, Deists. Monti, sometimes a Papist, sometimes a Jacobin, was but a miserable shuffler; Pindemonte, an amiable Pagan epicure. Perticari, a rusty pedant; the whole mass of Italian scholars only alive to worthless philological squabbles. Manzoni stood, for a long time, alone. Pellico, and the romantic brotherhood of the *conciliatore*, followed several years later in his footsteps. They were the first Italian hearts in which Manzoni's words found an echo.

Nothing, also, could equal the supineness of the Church of Rome at the time. She seemed to have nothing to fear, nothing to hope. Nothing she dreaded so much as controversy. No church-reviews were published, no organs of polemic divinity. Silence was the order of the day. The Propaganda was busy in Paraguay, or Otaheite. At home the gospel was left to take care of itself, and the generous enthusiast who aspired to raise his voice for Christianity, was looked upon as an indiscreet and unreasonable, even if not as a dangerous advocate.

On the other hand, among the Italian patriots, the pious device of Manzoni gave rise to different interpretations. The vindicator of religion was thought to harbour political views: to aim at a reconciliation of parties, at a fusion of moral and political principles. He was supposed to strive to win back to the cause of Italian emancipation the sound part of the clergy, and the moderate minds that still obeyed their impulse; and to make the mitre and crozier the rallying standard for an Italian confederacy, the banner of ancient Guelphism.

No one seemed willing to give him credit for honesty and straightforwardness of purpose. Yet the undertaking was in itself sufficiently generous to acquit him of all worldly motives. Consistency and uprightness ended by disarming suspicion. Manzoni has proved himself a sincere man. Priests and Austrians dare not touch him; nor liberals defame him. Amidst all that rancour of parties,

the more intense from being smothered in silence, the man of God stands alone and secure; revered by all, dreaded, or suspected, by none; inactive, not unfeeling; inoffensive, not servile. An Italian at heart, he beholds the evils of his country; he seeks for, hopes for no redress in this world; but he points to heaven; he suffers, he exhorts others to suffer, in Heaven's name.

It was mainly with these views that Manzoni laboured at the reconstruction of his country's creed. The rude disenchantment of his patriotic expectations at the fall of Napoleon had killed hope in his bosom. No chance was left, he apprehended, for an immediate emancipation of Italy.

Deeper and deeper he saw her sinking under the Austrian yoke. No firmness or unanimity could be looked for on the part of her degenerate sons, no justice or sympathy from the thankless nations of Europe. In the abyss she had fallen into, she would lie for a much longer period than human foresight could wade through. Against evils past cure nothing but resignation remains; even such resignation as religion affords.

Manzoni pointed to heaven; the only true country, the only home of mankind. The earth was for him a den of wild beasts; a wide field for the demons of evil to run riot in. A religious fatalist, he acknowledged in the tyrant the instrument of inscrutable Providence. His was the unresisting, pusillanimous faith, which by an exaggerated application of the gospel's doctrines would teach the slave to "turn the other cheek," and kiss the scourge that smites him. Justice and peace, he teaches, are not of this world. Blessed be the tribulation that chastens and hallows, blessed the storm-blast that hurries, even if it wrecks us, ashore!

For the promulgation of these meek doctrines nothing was better calculated than that complicate system of self-denial and humility, of mortification and abjectness, which

the craft of priesthood had so long forced on human superstition. Manzoni aspired to revive Catholicism in all its integrity. He was persuaded, that in the actual state of things all must stand or perish together; that any concession to the innovating spirit of the age was fraught with general subversion; that the removal of a single stone would bring the whole fabric to the ground. Confession and indulgences, monachism, all the worst practices of Romanism, no less than the most consoling principles of Christ's own teaching, were equally advocated with sober, but unshaken zeal.

It is possible that Manzoni saw in this uniformity of creed the pledge for unanimity of Italian nationality in ages to come. He certainly is never more eloquent than when he exults at the moderation and consistency of his countrymen on theological subjects, and their constant abhorrence of religious strife and bloodshed.

"Oh! among the horrible rancours," he says, "that divided Italians from Italians, this, at least, is not known. The passions that have made enemies of us did not, at least, abide behind the veil of the sanctuary. It is but too true, we find in every page of our annals, enmities sent down from generation to generation for wretched interests, and vengeance preferred to our own safety. We find in them, at every step, two parts of a nation fiercely disputing for supremacy, and for advantages which, at the end, for a great lesson, remained to neither. We find our ancestors wasting their forces in obstinate attempts to make slaves of such as might have been ardent and faithful friends; we read in them a frightful series of deplorable combats, but none, at least, like those of Cappel, Jarnac, and Prague. True, from this unfortunate land much blood will rise in judgment; but very little that has been spilt for the sake of religion. Little, I say, when compared with what stained the other parts of Europe. The furies and calamities of other nations give us the sad advantage of calling

that blood but little; but the blood of a single man, shed by the hand of his brother, is too much for all ages and countries."

But, whatever may be thought of his motives, no man was ever more true to his aim, none ever followed more closely one train of thought. His sacred hymns, his tragedies, his Ode on Napoleon, almost every chapter of his novel, are eminently Catholic; and not only was Catholicism incidentally introduced when the subject naturally led to it, but the works themselves were obviously undertaken for the sake of illustrating the sublimity of its sacred dogmas, and glorifying the importance of its consoling tendencies. At last, the ground being prepared by preliminary publications, the author gave form and system to his ideas by his essay on the "Morals of the Catholic Religion." The flame of charity he had clothed in all the glow of lyrical poetry, the profound meditations he had veiled under the pathos of tragedy, the salutary lessons resulting from the development of romantic catastrophes were now condensed and more immediately brought to bear on the subject. The apostle had cast off his mantle, and girded himself for his mission.

Every where the same pious melancholy, the same morbid sense of the unworthiness of earthly interests, the same more than monkish abstraction from human feelings: every where the same consciousness of impotence, the same profession of unwillingness to resist evil, the same readiness to refer all worldly differences to the arbitration of a heavenly Judge, to see the hand of God in every enormity of human injustice; the same disposition to give way to it, to acknowledge, as it were, and encourage it by too blind and passive a reliance on a future retribution—every where the same abnegation of all manly dignity, the same disregard of that Divine precept: "Aid thyself, and Heaven will aid thee."

God forgive him for errors committed in the pursuance of an honest intent For, certainly man was not created

in His own divine image, to submit to spurning and trampling, which instinct teaches the meanest reptile to resent. God suffered evil to prevail upon earth to test our energies of reaction, no less than our powers of endurance. We are eager to know His own will, that we may never bow to another's. It is only by resisting *à l'outrance* that we may discern the stroke direct from His hand, from the mere infliction of human malignity.

The Italians have too long made a virtue of their *pazienza per forza*. No good can come of teaching them to regard the Austrians as ministers of God's displeasure. It is written so in no book of Holy Scripture. And were it even so, religion and manhood would be no longer compatible.

Full of this generous, even though mistaken spirit, and glowing with the heat of true poetic inspiration, Manzoni looked round for the form through which his thoughts might, in the most impressive form, be conveyed to the reluctant hearts of his fellow-mortals. No style of writing was, in that epoch, more popular in Italy than Schiller's drama and Walter Scott's novel. Manzoni attempted both.

Italy had then, as we have seen, for the first time, abdicated her leadership in literature and art. She was gradually recovering from the narrow-mindedness of her classic conceit. She admitted of greater latitude in the apprehension and reproduction of the beautiful. She bowed to northern genius, acknowledged its vastness and fecundity, its earnestness, depth, and character, its uncompromising adherence to nature.

Schiller was, of course, the best understood and appreciated of all the ultramontanes. His pure and gentle thoughts, even under the disguise of the humble prose of Pompeo Ferrario, struck upon Italian hearts as a revelation of new and unexplored regions in the human soul. The novelty of form, the transcendency of sentiment,

alarmed even less than it enraptured the more sober and correct taste of the southern people. Even their almighty Alfieri seemed dry and cold by comparison with the more plastic and sympathetic mind of the German. Schiller entwined himself round the heart, and no room was left for the free exercise of judgment.

But even greater was the enthusiasm which welcomed the Waverley Novels into Italian soil. Translations of these works, there, as in France, vied in expedition with the original Ballantyne press. New versions and editions followed close upon each other, in almost every town of the Peninsula; and, for several years, the "Ariosto of the North" had nearly weaned that southern people from their copious and brilliant national literature.

Henceforth, it was felt, Italy was to serve out her apprenticeship; the most aspiring of her poets was to sink into the mere imitator. Brought up amidst the recent popularisation of foreign literature in Italy, Manzoni had studied with transport the best models in the German and English languages. His earliest poetical essays had already placed him at the head of that romantic school, which, vague in its aims and purposes, was, however, rising up, fresh and vigorous, in northern Italy. His two tragedies, written, as it was supposed, in imitation of Schiller, and his historical romance after the manner of Scott, were the first models upon which Romanticism grounded its principles.

Manzoni, however, if he had not the real attributes of an original poet, had not the mediocrity which condescends to servile imitation. Consequently, was he, in many points, both below and above the works he was supposed to have looked up to for the standard of his own productions; and his subordination to the master-intellects of Schiller and Scott amounted to nothing more than the most vague and nominal allegiance.

His tragedies cannot be strictly said to belong to the

German or English school, though certainly the author did not seek his models among the classics. He does not possess the wide and versatile imagination of Shakspeare, nor the warm and sympathetic heart of Schiller: though we meet with occasional flashes both of fancy and feeling, which would induce us to attribute that apparent infecundity rather to vague timidity than to a real want of creative genius. His pages appear as if filled with corrections, additions, suppressions, *pentimenti d'ogni maniera.* This gives his works, unquestionably, a very high finish; and every one of his lines gains more and more the longer it is dwelt upon. Still it has an injurious effect as a whole; and, as dramatic performances, his tragedies are utterly destitute of action and interest.

Of these tragedies, the first only, "Carmagnola" appeared, and only once, on the stage; nor do I believe they could ever meet with any permanent success before an Italian audience. Manzoni—a genius of the very best order, giving life to all objects he takes in hand, master of all the keys of the imagination and the heart—did not, perhaps, equally possess that vastness and calmness of mind, which can embrace at one glance the whole of a tragedy.

With that timid diffidence and laborious diligence peculiar to a country in which literature could not be cultivated from interested motives, and where self-approval, or else fame must be the author's only reward, Manzoni appears above all things anxious to fetter and pinion his genius, as if in sheer terror that it might run away with him. In his endeavours to appear sober and natural, he chills the reader with the constant evidence of effort and restraint. "Carmagnola" and "Adelchi" are consequently no dramas; nor can the "Promessi Sposi" be called a romance. There is nothing of the warmth of action and interest which ought to be inseparable from those styles of composition. It is hardly pos-

sible to read with that climax of excitement, which writers, even of the lowest order, are almost invariably able to give their performance.

It is not under such self-imposed fetters of intellectual pusillanimity that a poet can venture on the stage, or lay the threads for a romantic narrative. Manzoni knows nothing of plots and character. Satisfied with having selected his subject amongst the leading events of national history, and in so far complying with the patriotic tendencies of the school he belonged to, he proceeds to give full development to the pious sentiments his own heart overflows with, with little regard to their appropriateness to times and persons. Eminently a lyrical poet and nothing but a lyrical poet, he gave the world, in his two tragedies, only a texture of lyrical thoughts.

Recently placed in contact with Shakspeare and Schiller—seeing in their works a manifest breach of the three unities of the Greeks, he believed, perhaps, that they had banished all unity. This is far from being the case. The unity of time from the period of twenty-four hours, had been extended to months and years, to the lifetime of a hero: the scene, from the narrow precincts of the vestibule of a palace, had passed from place to place, had crossed seas and mountains: the four or six personages who were seen moving, spectre-like, on a deserted stage—as the survivors of the deluge, it has been cleverly observed—had been multiplied to a whole court, to a whole nation; but the action, the interest, the movement of the drama, far from stagnating or slackening, was understood to have gained in strength and intensity. Taking any of the best models of the Romantic theatre—say, Macbeth and Othello, William Tell and Fiesco—it will be easily perceived whether the poet or the spectator loses, for a single instant, his leading object.

It is, I repeat, only the scale that has been altered. It is unity in larger dimensions, but still unity.

Now I do not mean that Manzoni's tragedies are wanting in such unity. "Adelchi" is the extinction of the Lombard dynasty. "Carmagnola" is the cold-blooded sacrifice of a confiding warrior to the jealous suspicions of a cowardly government. All the episodes essentially belong to the subject: every scene leads us to the catastrophe. Still there is wanting that warmth, that simplicity of action, that proportion between the means and ends which permit us to view the whole at a glance, and follow its progress through its digressions—which persuade us of the importance of the episodes—which keep our minds in suspense, our hearts in anxiety.

Neither was the poet happier in his delineation of characters. There is hardly, among so many, a portrait whose prominent features may work on our minds a lasting impression. The great figures of the Lombard kings, and of Charlemagne, appear in all the dim and hazy obscurity in which barren history has left them—stripped of all the gaudy ornaments with which they had been invested by the fictions of chivalrous legends.

As the ancient mythology had been banished from the stage, so did Manzoni equally proscribe the more domestic romance of the middle ages. How different from his faithful but languid pictures, are the historical scenes dramatised by Shakspeare, who eagerly seized upon the most uncouth popular traditions, and delighted in crowding the stage with hags, spectres, fairies, and goblins!

To exhibitions of such a kind, the public taste is, however, utterly averse in Italy. Alfieri knew it well; and his example was more than sufficient to deter every Italian dramatist from those long-exploded sources of interest; nor could there longer be any of the weird family ventured on our stage, without being unmercifully hissed back to its obscure abode.

The interest in Manzoni's productions is, or we are much mistaken, concentrated in the poet himself. The

character of Adelchi, in the tragedy that bears his name, appears feeble and languid; that of the soldier of fortune, Carmagnola, in the other piece, is equally deficient in energy. We look in vain for those salient points by which the masterly portraiture of a manly character works a lasting impression on our soul. Great skill is displayed, it is true, in the delineation of some of the subordinate personages; but the poet, after being at the trouble of bringing them forth, seems embarrassed with them, and only eager to rid himself of their presence, the conjuror is at a loss how to dispose of the demons he has ventured to evoke.

The drama, no less than romance, was to be turned to the purpose of a moral and religious essay. Regardless of general effect, and directing all his efforts to mere details and episodes, with a conviction that these latter might more readily be made subservient to his views, Manzoni gave his performance just as much compactness and unity as might secure the vote of an indulgent critic of his own new romantic school, yet not enough, perhaps, to conciliate the attention, or rivet the interests of the general reader.

As lyrical poetry in action, however, Manzoni's drama may easily be pronounced inimitable. The dark veil of melancholy which we see hovering all about us, over all created things, has something in it that appeals to our innermost sympathies: for sorrow comes willingly home to our heart, it glides into it as to its natural abode; we cherish it, we hug it even to ebriety. Manzoni's strain is one continued lay of the broken-hearted. Even his evil-doers are rather the object of our pity than our hatred. They know not what they are doing. They are the blind instruments in the hand of an unfathomable, but, doubtless, just and benevolent fatality. In sorrow more than in anger do we look upon them.

The Italians of the fifteenth century are slaying each

other in "Carmagnola." They know not, they inquire not into the causes of their mad animosities. Hirelings in the pay of a hireling leader; they shout, they charge, they trample each other into the dust.

"Down from the fastnesses of the Alpine barrier, meantime, the foreign invader casts an exulting glance. He beholds the brave that lie low in the carnage field: he numbers them with a fiendish joy."

"Fatal land!" exclaims the poet, in the agony of true feeling, "fatal land, where thy children struggled, as if for want of elbow-room—make way now for the victorious stranger. It is only the beginning of God's judgment.

"An enemy, never provoked by thee, sits insultingly at thy festive board, snatches the sceptre from thy ruler's hands, shares the spoils of victory—a victory for which thy insane feuds paved the way.

"Yet no less insane is the joy of his triumph. Can any race ever prosper through outrage and bloodshed? The joy of the violent soon turns to mourning; the vanquished alone is exempt from woe.

"'Tis not always, indeed, that Heaven's vengeance stops him in his headlong race, but it marks him, it follows, it watches him; it reaches him on his last breath.

"All made in the semblance of one Being, all children of the same redemption, in whatever age, on whatever land we may breathe this vital air,

"We are brethren, all bound to one covenant. God's curse on him who violates it, who rises on the ruin of the afflicted, who tortures and crushes an immortal soul!"

"Blessed are they who mourn!" Every line of Manzoni is an illustration of the same consoling text.

In the same manner, Carmagnola, fallen into the toils of the wily Venetian patricians, who resolve upon breaking their instrument, the moment his services bode danger to the state—Carmagnola breathes words of forgiveness and resignation to his distracted daughter.

"No, my own Matilda, let not a word of rancour or vengeance darken the serenity of thy innocent soul, or disturb the solemnity of these supreme moments.

* * * * * *

"Oh! Death is not the work of human contrivance; it would then be rabid, unendurable: our worst enemy can do no more than hasten it. It comes from God's hand; and bears with it God's own peace, which men can neither give nor take away."

Adelchi dies with words on his lips conveying the same lesson of submission to the overpowering evil that sways this nether world.

"A deep secret is life—unfathomable but to the last hour.

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"There is no room in the world for righteous deeds: nothing is left but to inflict wrong or endure it. An overbearing Might rules the earth, and it calls itself Right. Our forefather's hand, blood-stained, hath sown injustice: with blood have our fathers fostered it: the earth yields now no other harvest."

This is, indeed, disheartening doctrine; and all the worse for coming, as it does, at the close of a long tale of woe. This Adelchi—this last of the Lombard dynasty, the only righteous individual of a guilty and doomed race—has been all his lifetime striving after all that was noble and beautiful.

"Oh! it seemed to me—truly did it seem to me, that I was born for something higher than to be the chief of a robber's band; that Heaven allotted a nobler part to me in this distressed land than to lay it waste, without danger, without honour.

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"My heart is vexed, Anfrido. It bids me aspire to lofty and generous deeds, and fortune drives me to deeds of iniquity. I move on, dragged by a fatal necessity, on a

path, not of my choice, a dark, aimless path; and my heart withers even as a seed fallen on barren soil, tossed about by the wind."

Every one of Manzoni's heroes sinks to his grave with Brutus's dark despair in his heart. Each of them has staked his existence on the cause of righteousness and virtue—each of them finds out on his last breath that life has been wasted in the pursuit of a dream. True, Manzoni's are Christian heroes. Light immortal is dawning even as the darkness of death closes in upon them. In the bosom of God, within sight of his eternal retribution, they cast one last glance of repining and disappointment upon the things of the earth. Human misery reaches them no longer; yet they fret and murmur at the fatality which frustrated all their attempts to alleviate or redress it.

But between the sublimest theories of divine doctrine and the blackest blasphemy there is only one step. Prostrate on the ground with incurable wounds, with life ebbing fast away, or taking leave of wife and child on the eve of execution, a stage hero may, in sooth, be allowed the indulgence of vague, incoherent ravings. But if the poet himself speaks through their lips, if every scene in the drama is only to lead to these heart-rending conclusions, we must mistrust the holiness of a professedly religious production in which God is made too closely after the writer's own image.

What? we must ask of the sainted Manzoni, does the earth allow no scope for pure and virtuous deeds? Must each of us either do or endure injury? And is it so hopeless and needless for man to battle with fortune? And are not fortune and fatality synonymous expressions with providence?

The sublime Christian doctrine of the forgiveness of injuries is equally misapplied in many instances. God's hand strikes us, it is true, through the hand of our enemy. In the last extremity, when our duty to ourselves and our

fellow-beings is thoroughly accomplished, when we are conscious of utter impotence to struggle on; then, and then only, is it time for us to acknowledge and bow to God's will. It is blasphemous, we think, to yield to every stroke of adversity; nay, more, to every infliction of human malignity, with a conviction that we are conforming to Heaven's decrees. It was, undoubtedly, God's pleasure that evil should play a prominent part in the matters of this sublunar world: that the noblest faculties of our soul should be proved, tempered by it. He armed the elements, the beasts of the field, the monsters of the deep against man; He encompassed him with danger and death; He sowed the seeds of evil propensities in our very heart, so that man should be as a wolf against man: but He also gave us the sense of right and wrong; an upright tendency to aspire to the former—a stubborn strength to oppose the latter. A brave heart struggling with adversity is said to be the most pleasing object in His sight. Even as we strive against the rage of the storm, even as we dare the savage fury of the brute, so must we bear up against the ill will of our brother. Till a spark of life remains, it is our most sacred duty to resist; time enough to forgive—if forgiveness is to be interpreted as submission—time enough to forgive when we writhe in death on the ground.

This mean and grovelling *pietism* could do but little harm in England, a country so far removed from hostile aggression, sailing so steadily before the wind of prosperity, and only occasionally afflicted with such calamities as the most stubborn must readily acknowledge as the immediate visitation of God. But Italy is struggling for existence. Public opinion is rising fast in that country, waiting only for time and opportunity to ripen it into action. No great good can come to the Italians from informing them that "the conquered alone are free from sorrow," or that "the joy of the violent will be turned to wailing." The Austrians are there at any rate, crushing, trampling them

down. However they may feel on their death-bed, they hold the country, fearless, remorseless, as they think, by the holy right of conquest and the grace of God. "At it again, sons of Italy!" should be the cry of every honest man in the country. "Let no sophism of a false fear of God stay your hand; degrading thraldom is undeniable evil; God intended it for none of the children of men. Appeal once more to his justice. Try one more chance—and those who are slain for their country's sake may, if they please, kiss the German bayonet that gores them and call it the sword of God's justice." It is but too true, "Might has long been Right upon earth;" it is so still to an awful extent. But let us be in no hurry to admit of its sovereignty. "Make yourselves sheep," as the Italian proverb has it, "and the wolves will eat you."* Had such men as William Tell or Gustavus Vasa, Hampden or Wilberforce cherished Manzoni's sentiments, the earth would now hardly harbour one nation unenslaved—the mass of mankind would walk on all-fours like beasts of burden.

But we have, perhaps, too long dwelt on what we consider the erroneous, and, as far as Italy is concerned, fatal tendencies of Manzoni's morals. They were, in him, merely the consequence of that constitutional nervousness his friends attributed to him. Pellico adopted the same language when his spirit was broken at Spielberg. The same maudlin meekness and contriteness prevailed for many years among the writers of the Romantic school, chiefly in the north of Italy. They all "left politics alone, and spoke of something else." But politics in Italy are not merely a subject for amateur discussion. It is matter of life and death. No man of honour and understanding is entitled to keep aloof, or to remain neutral in the struggle; not any more, at least, than an Englishman

* Colui che si fa pecora
Il lupo se lo mangia.

should look on unconcerned whilst a horde of Cossacks sit in the council chambers of his sovereign, or garrison the Tower of London.

Nothing, indeed, more saddening, nothing more disgusting, in a country like Italy, where every civil and ecclesiastical institution has been for centuries conspiring to undermine the last bulwarks of native manliness in the people's bosom—nothing more revolting than to hear men of distinguished intellect and upright, generous character, with so honest a patriot as Manzoni at their head—preaching cowardice in God's name.

Manzoni's novel was undertaken with views even more consonant with the tenour of his mind. He chose a national subject out of the most calamitous times in the calamitous history of the country. The scene is at Milan, in the early part of the seventeenth century, during the worst period of the stupid and brutal Spanish dominion. The poet felt sure to meet with nothing likely to exalt or console him, between the blind ferocity of the ruler, and the abject degradation of the subject. Society was as unredeemable a den of wild beasts as heart could desire. Manzoni's heroes are a silk weaver, and a village girl, both gifted with none but the most utterly negative virtues. Nor are Renzo and Lucia destitute of interest merely because they belong to the uneducated classes. Gow Chrom and the Fair Maid of Perth are equally picked out among a set of low-born artisans; but the former is recommended to the reader by his headlong bravery; the latter is endeared to us by her exalted, enthusiastic piety. Manzoni was, above all things, afraid of the charge of mannerism. His peasants are most awfully, most inexorably true to nature. They possess not one trait of idealised beauty. In danger of her life and honour, Lucy can only pray and vow herself to the Virgin, and hasten to consult her father-confessor. Roused into a fit of impotent fury, by the most daring outrage, and goaded even into temptations of murder, Renzo in good time is

reminded of his Madonna and saints, and seeks for redress at his lawyer's. Manzoni laughs at him with great glee, for repeatedly expressing a hope of meeting with fair dealing upon earth. "There *is* justice in this world, after all," quoth the bumpkin. "So true it is," observes the moralising poet—"so true is it, that a man, under the influence of distracting passions, no longer knows what he is talking about."

All the other characters of the plot, though more repulsive, are equally uninteresting. The Italian feudal nobles, the willing slaves of the arrogant Spaniard, combine such a degree of baseness and cowardice with their love of oppression, haughtiness, and rapacity, with so much ignorance, absurdity, obstinacy, as might with difficulty be found amongst the most unrefined serf-owners in the Russian dominions. Out of so large a number of lay potentates, exception is only made in favour of an old obdurate villain, the *Innominato*, whose heart was about to be touched, whose conversion was to be made subservient to the author's favourite theories.

Fra Cristoforo and Cardinal Borromeo, are, properly speaking, the heroes—a monk and a prelate—the only elements of good amidst that all-pervading influence of evil. Even their interference is, as may well be imagined, too often inefficient and null. Don Rodrigo, his profligate cousin, backed by their imbecile relative of the privy council, succeed in parting the betrothed lovers asunder; they obtain the removal of the meddling friar; Renzo is driven abroad; Lucy forced from the very shelter of the sanctuary —the archbishop's attention is too soon called away by other more important cares—and the current of true love might never run smooth for our two rustic swains, but for a blessed pestilence, sweeping away the young feudatory and all his evil abettors and counsellors with him, and allowing the earth a little breathing-time from the wonted prevalence of villany and oppression.

Villany and oppression, therefore, must have their own way uncontrolled, no matter what resistance we offer to them: "Know you not," preaches Fra Cristoforo, the beau-ideal of a Christian, after Manzoni's stamp—"know you not that to put forth his claws will do no good to the weak? and, were it even so, it would be a terrible gain, at the best." Priests and monks, their saints and virgins, can only console, not often help us. It behoves us to bow our heads, as devout pilgrims under a heavy shower, without murmur or complaint: the finger of Providence will be manifest in the end: God holds the seven scourges of Egypt ready at hand: the oppressor never fails to be smitten at the very height of his insolent success: or were he even suffered to go on, unrestrained, to the end of his career, what of it? Let us only have faith—God's mark is upon him—vengeance watches and follows him: it will overtake him, if no sooner, as the gloom of death encompasses him. Such are Manzoni's views of God's justice.

Upon such theories, sound and holy in themselves, fatal in their conclusions, the most brilliant faculties of a fertile imagination were brought to bear. As a dramatic poet no less than as a novelist, Manzoni deserves the greatest applause for vividness of description, for ease and gracefulness of style. His ample powers of invention were never allowed a sufficiently ample scope, but were rather employed to little or no purpose. Scenery and personages are delineated to the life; the human heart is sounded to its inmost depths; each of the cumbrous and long-winded episodes is calculated to entwine itself round our heart; yet the main stories are utterly void of permanent interest.

There are soliloquies in "Carmagnola," such as the one by the hero himself, when he deliberates upon the expediency of accepting the general command of the Venetian forces, and turning his arms against his former patron and friend, the Duke of Milan—that of the senator, Marino, on the eve of betraying, or suffering at least his friend, the

confiding soldier of fortune, to fall into the snare of his fellow-patricians—the monologue of Svarto, in the "Adelchi," laying before us the uncouth but ambitious mind of a common trooper, preparing to fish in troubled waters, and grounding his hope of advancement in the dissensions and downfal of his lords—the abject hesitation of Guntigi, between the dastard promptings of self-preservation, and the compunctious visiting of conscience and duty—finally, the struggles of the noble Adelchi against the suggestions of despair and suicide — all of which is conveyed to our minds, with a truth, a simplicity of expression, amply proving that the poet has studied both nature and Shakspeare to some purpose.

Still more successful was our author in his effusions of deeper pathetic. The closing scene of the sufferings of Ermengarda, the divorced queen of Charlemagne: the agony of Adelchi: Carmagnola's last apostrophe to his war steed, his brother-in-arms, the open fields, and wide-spreading sun; his contrast of a soldier's death with the cold-blooded sacrifice that awaits him—every appeal of Manzoni to the reader's sympathies, is always sure of an immediate response.

The far-famed novel, "I Promessi Sposi," presented, of course, a greater variety of characters and incidents than the solemnity of tragedy could admit of. Read the uproar of a peaceful hamlet, aroused by the alarm-bell at midnight—a Milanese mob, goaded by hunger to riot and violence —the squalor of a city struck by the dire hand of pestilence. A long series of exquisite pictures laid before us, without sufficient connection, indeed, but with all the finish of an artist who works for love. The episode of the Innominato's conversion—that of the death of the petty villain, Don Rodrigo—are touched with a masterly hand throughout. But that of the Signora di Monza is in itself a romance, and constitutes, perhaps, the finest chapter in any novel, ancient or modern, past and to come. It is a story

of love and guilt; all the more appalling from the veil of mystery under which the poet was pleased to shroud it; which gives us reason to regret that it should not have been chosen as the main subject of the novel; and greater reason to lament that it should have been left unfinished, to be clumsily spun out, patched, and cobbled, by Rosini, in two volumes, which bear the title of the "Nun of Monza." The conspiracy of a whole household, of a whole community, against a child in its cradle; the mean, unnatural stratagems to bury it alive in the cloisters; the cold-blooded watchfulness of the tyrant-father over every wayward feeling of a doomed girl; his fiendish delight at a first juvenile *faux-pas*, which gives her, bound body and soul, into his power; and, after her sacrifice, the development in her miserable heart of worldly passions, which had been too long, too outrageously pent up and crushed; her rapid plunge into profligacy, into crime of the darkest die; all is told with such an exquisite attention to the working of the human heart, with so much truth, so much delicacy and temperance, that our feelings of pity, of indignation, of horror and resentment, were never, perhaps, called forth with greater readiness and intensity.

That affecting story is, nevertheless, only an episode; and, as such, it will even appear long and tedious to those who attach any importance to the paltry vicissitudes of the two betrothed lovers. The share that the Nun of Monza has in their affairs is indirect and transitory. After so minute and elaborate an introduction, the guilty Nun makes her bow to the reader and retires to her unquiet solitude, never to be heard of afterwards. Manzoni's characters are all equally inactive. Don Ferrante, the heavy pedant, Donna Prassede his methodist wife, the Podestà, a pompous blockhead, Azzecca-Garbugli, the sycophantic petty-fogger, the Conte Zio, the fool of state, Fra Galdino, a cowled Figaro, Don Abbondio, the selfish coward—Manzoni had a particular delight in the personification of this

character—all these comic personages are brought before the reader, recommended to his particular notice, but almost as soon dropped by the author. They do little good and less harm. It is only the pestilence—good, accommodating pestilence—that settles all scores. Men are only puppets, dressed up, tricked out with great care, each of them perfect in his own way, but most preposterously jumbled together.

Every chapter in the tame and uneventful story is likewise episodical. Don Rodrigo's persecutions, and Fra Cristoforo's suggestions, drive the two lovers from their native village. The famine and consequent riots at Milan involve the single-minded Renzo in some drunken scrape, in consequence of which he is fain to take his refuge into the neighbouring territories of the Venetian republic. The plague, and ensuing disorganisation of all social orders, enable him to return. All inconvenient persons are disposed of, in a summary way, by the contagious disease; and, released from their worst terrors by the death of their enemy, freed from rash vows by priestly authority, purged from political interdicts by the interference of powerful friends, the betrothed are at last united. Even then they show no great eagerness to build their nest in their birthplace; they bid their old home a lasting farewell, and hasten to settle among strangers.

All this, we repeat, appears languid and clumsy. Hardly a beginner but would exercise his inventive powers with more brilliant result. Partial beauties only make us more painfully alive to the imperfections of the main action. The parts seem even assiduously studied to mar the effect of the whole.

It is indeed possible that this want of unity of action and interest was voluntary and intentional on the part of the author. His object was, perhaps, less to add one more to the hundred works of fiction that poured in upon Italy from all Northern Europe, than to cure his countrymen of

their blind partiality for that style of writing. He seemed willing to prove how easy it is to give reality all the charms of romantic narrative. He called his novel "A page of Milanese History." Nothing more punctual than his adherence to historical fact. Even his most trivial characters are said to have their prototypes in some of the old chronicles of the country. He would not, like his predecessor, Scott, depart from truth for the sake of effect; he would not crowd startling events together, regardless of anachronisms or local inaccuracy. He would not shadow forth as a positive fact what is obscurely hinted at as a traditional surmise. He did not think, with the author of the "Last of the Barons," that "one crime more or less cannot add to or take away from the reputation of an essentially bad character." "Truth," for him, "was stranger than fiction." Even as an inventor, he is merely a portrait painter. Tame and dull he may be, but never fantastic or exaggerated.

His dialogues are mere common-place. Comic sometimes, for comedy may be compatible with prose, but none of his personages are ever allowed to spout poetic sentiments any more than they are made to speak in rhythmical language. Fra Cristoforo alone is almost sublime in one or two instances, but even this arises rather from the solemnity of circumstance than from loftiness of speech.

But the poetry which we look for in vain from the hero's lips breathes from the poet's own soul. Their thoughts are often noble or gentle, though they can find no words to give them utterance. The poet delights in giving them a helping hand now and then. Witness the "Farewell of Lucia to her Country," which we will attempt to transcribe, as it is eminently characteristic of Manzoni's style, of his complete reliance on the most genuine and natural emotions of simple hearts for poetical effect.

The poor Milanese *Tosa*, obliged to escape from the insolence of a libertine feudatory, Don Rodrigo, is sailing

by moonlight on her native lake, casting a last glance at her hamlet, at the home of her childhood. Overcome by emotions, she hides her face as if composing herself to sleep, and weeps undisturbed. It is well she holds her tongue; were she to give free vent to her gloomy meditations, her plain language might shock us even as the prince, in fairy legends, was disenchanted by the coarse expressions of the three fair village sisters. Something *niais* more than *naïve* might be the result. But it is the poet that speaks, and Lucy will not feel inclined to quarrel with her eloquent interpreter.

"Farewell, ye mountains, emerging from the waters reared up to the sky, whose bold outlines are graved in the heart of him who was born among you, no less than the features of his parent; whose murmuring streams sound like the music of a friend's voice; and ye, lonely hamlets, scattered between hill and dale, white and pure, glittering in the landscape like flocks pasturing on the hill-side—farewell!

"How sad the steps of those who, born among you, depart from you! Even in the fancy of a man who leaves you of his own choice, allured by prospects of fortune smiling upon him in far-off countries—even in his fancy his golden dreams fade (*si disabbelliscono*) as you fade in the distant horizon; and he wonders and repines, and would fain retrace his steps, were it not for the glimmering thought of a future day, when ease and wealth will follow him on his return. The further he advances on the plain the more his eye withdraws weary and dejected from that monotonous vastness. The air is to him heavy and lifeless. Sad and absent he treads among the busy throng of tumultuous cities. The houses on houses and streets on streets seem to take away his breath; and before the proudest edifices, wonder of foreign visitors, the home-sick mountaineer thinks with restless longing of the white cottage and homestead in his village on which his heart is long

since set, and which will be his if he ever gets back a rich man to his mountains.

"But for one who had never sent beyond those mountains even an idle thought, even a fleeting glance—one who had bound within their limits the dearest schemes of the future—one driven away by oppression, who, torn from the dearest habits, from the fondest expectations, abandons those hills to move among strangers never thought of, never wished for—one who cannot, even in imagination, fix on the day of return—

"Farewell, native home, where peacefully seated, treasuring a hidden thought, the heart learnt to distinguish from the common footsteps one footstep, expected with unaccountable anxiety and mysterious fear; farewell, home—as yet a stranger's, so often furtively glanced at, timidly and not unblushingly glanced at, where the mind loved to build up a tranquil sojourn of wedded felicity; farewell, village church, whence the soul so often returned pure and serene, singing the hymns of the Lord—where a sacred rite was prepared, promised—where the secret sigh of the heart was to be solemnly blessed, and love to become a duty and be called holy, farewell. He who bestowed so much joy upon you is every where, and He never disturbs the happiness of His children but to prepare for them a greater and more lasting bliss."

Renzo's "good night" to his fatherland is somewhat more coarse and boorish. But then the poor clown speaks for himself. He has no reporter to set up his blunt thoughts into elegant phrases. Led by chance into the midst of a bread riot at Milan, prodigal of his own enlightened views on political economy and statesmanship in general, he falls into the wiles of an honest sword-cutler, who turns out to be no other than a bailiff in disguise. Roused from his drunken slumbers by a brace of thief-takers, who arrest him in the king's name, rescued by a

mob, and resolved to be "a bird in the bush rather than in a cage," he hurries through the beleaguered town gate, threads his way to the frontier, with incessant march, day and night, till he stands on the banks of the river that traces the boundary line. A half-fishing, half-smuggling boat wafts him across. He bounds ashore, looks back with a mixture of rancour and exultation.

"Ah! I am quit of it at last!" Such was his first thought. "Lie there, accursed country," was the second, his farewell to his native land. But the third ran back to her who was left behind. He then crossed his arms on his breast, breathed hard, glanced downwards towards the water that ran at his feet and thought: "It has passed under the bridge." Like his countryfolk he designated under that general name the Bridge of Lecco. "Oh, the vile world! Enough, God's will be done!"

Even Manzoni's monks, with all his reverence for the habit, are oftentimes plain and vulgar. Some traits escaped him, it appears, in which the reverend fathers appear at no great advantage; and these are the passages, it may be, which cause Manzoni to regret, as we are informed, that he ever put pen to paper. We will only quote a monkish miracle, told in the quaint language of a mendicant friar, such as may be heard almost daily in many a poor hut on the Apennines, nay, in many a log cabin in Catholic Ireland.

"How do you get on with your begging?" said Agnes (Lucy's mother) to Fra Galdino, the tithe-gatherer, or mendicant, of a neighbouring Capuchin fraternity.

"Indifferently, my good woman, but indifferently. Here is my whole harvest," said the friar; and, so saying, he removed his sack from his shoulder, and tossing it in the air, and catching it in his hand—"here is all our walnut-harvest," said he, "and to get together all this fine store I have been obliged to knock at ten doors."

"Ah! bad times are these, Fra Galdino, and when people have to fight for their bread they are apt to be penny wise."

"Penny wise, pound fool," quoth the monk. "What remedy is there, my good woman, to put an end to bad times? alms, my good woman, nothing but alms. Do you know any thing of that fine miracle of the walnuts, that took place many years since in one of our convents of Romagna?"

"I do not, indeed; let us have it."

"Oh! you must know, then, that once upon a time there was in that convent one of our fathers who was a saint, and he was called Padre Macario. On a winter afternoon, as he passed across a field belonging to one of our benefactors, also a worthy man, he saw this benefactor at the foot of a huge walnut tree, and four of his labourers with hatchets in the air, cutting away at the luckless tree to root it up. 'Eh! what are you doing to that poor tree?' inquired Father Macario. 'Oh, father,' replied the good man, 'for years and years we can get never a walnut out of it, I 'll even try if I can make fire-wood with it.' 'Leave it alone, leave it alone,' said the father. 'I 'll tell you, in good sooth, that next year it will bear more walnuts than leaves.' The benefactor, well knowing who it was had said that word, bade his men to throw back the sod upon the roots, and calling after the friar, who went his way, 'Father Macario, he said, one-half of the harvest will be given to the convent.'

"The report of that prediction spread abroad. Every one kept watch on the walnut tree. In fact, early in spring lots of blossoms, and then lots upon lots of nice walnuts. The good benefactor had not the consolation to shell them, for he went, before harvest-time, to reap the reward of his charity in a better world. But the miracle was all the more startling, as you shall hear.

"That worthy man had left after him a son of a very different description. Now then, at harvest-time, the con-

vent beggar knocked at the door to receive the moiety that was due to the convent. But the fellow looked as if taken by surprise at the news, and had even the boldness to say, that 'he had never heard that Capuchins could make nuts."

"Now, can you guess what took place? One day—now, listen to this—the scape-grace had one day invited some friends of his own stamp (*dello stesso pelo*, a rich monkish expression), and as he guzzled and revelled with them, he was telling the story of the walnut tree, and making fun at the monks' expense. Those young rakes were seized with a whim to see that preposterous heap of nuts, and he showed them to the granary.—Now is your time to open your ears. —He opens the door, steps up to the corner where the great heap of nuts had been laid, and, as he says, 'look there!' he looks himself, and sees—what then?—why, only a mouldering heap of walnut leaves. Do you call this an example, eh? And, instead of losing by that defrauded donation, the convent gained greatly by it; for, after so great a prodigy, the begging for walnuts was so very, very productive, that a benefactor, moved to pity at the hard work of the begging friar, bestowed upon the convent the charity of an ass, which might help him to carry in all that wondrous plenty; and the oil they made was in so great a quantity, that every poor body had as large a supply as heart might wish; for, remember, we monks are like the sea, receiving water on every side, only to distribute it bountifully to every stream."

Manzoni's Capuchins can, indeed, hold a different language. Famine, pestilence, have always been the battle-field of these mean and ignorant, but brave and devoted, brethren.

True friends of humanity in the hour of need (to give the devil his due), they made up for an age of gross indulgence in times of prosperity, by a generous sacrifice of their comfort and safety at the first appearance of great

public calamities. When the blind instinct of self-preservation broke the most sacred ties of domestic tenderness asunder, they, the proverbially unfeeling and self-engrossed, stepped invariably forward in all the sublimity of their mission. Manzoni's Capuchins, during the Milan pestilence, are objects of the deepest interest. Fra Cristoforo, who dies there a victim to his zeal, is in his very element. His exhortations to Renzo, as he points with his finger to Don Rodrigo's death-bed, belong to the genuine spirit of Christianity; and the youth's anger and resentment are readily quenched in his bosom, in presence of the awful dealings of eternal justice.

Throughout the description of that terrible disaster, Manzoni's genius is lifted to its highest flight. From the days of Thucydides to Boccaccio, Botta, and De Foe, the world had seen powerful pictures of the plague; Manzoni outdid them all. The gushing feeling of humanity and religion, uppermost in his heart, imparts to the whole description a touching, ineffable tenderness, far more impressive than the most elaborate accumulation of horror and woe.

Hear Father Felice's sermon in the Lazaret of Milan:—

"Let us turn one thought upon the thousands and thousands who have gone out that way," pointing to the cemetery; "let us look around upon the thousands remaining, too much at a loss to know which way they shall go; and again, look upon ourselves, the very few that escape with life. Blessed be the name of the Lord!—blessed in his justice; blessed in his mercy; blessed in death; blessed in salvation; blessed in this choice he was pleased to make of us! Oh! why was such his pleasure, my children, but to preserve around him a little flock, chastened by affliction, warmed by gratitude; but to impress us more strongly with the conviction that life is His gift; that we may value it as such; that we may employ it in works worthy of Him; that the remembrance of our sufferings may teach us pity

for the sufferings of others? Meanwhile let these, whose fears and hopes we have shared, amongst whom we leave friends, relatives—brethren, at any rate, for all are brethren—let these, as they see us pass between them, as the rare instances of our convalescence inspire them with some confidence for themselves; let them be no less relieved than edified by the meekness and holiness of our demeanour. Heaven forbid that they should read on our countenance a clamorous, a carnal joy for having escaped that death they are still so cruelly combating against. Let them see that our thanksgiving for ourselves is still a prayer for them: let them feel that even without these doors we shall remember them, call down God's mercy upon them. From this very walk, from our first steps into restored existence, let ours be a life of love. Let those whose strength is revived, tender a brotherly arm to the weak: let the young bear up the old. You, childless parents, see how many fatherless children are about you—be like fathers unto them! The charity that is to cover your sins, will soothe your sorrows at the same time."

It would be gratuitous on our part to add more quotations from "The Betrothed," a work (to say nothing of its numerous, though all unsatisfactory translations) so familiar to the youngest beginner in Italian scholarship; of which several editions, in the original, have been published in London itself.

Manzoni's tragedies are less popular in this country, as, indeed, every where out of Italy. The fine lyrical feeling that runs throughout them admits of no foreign imitation. We have, nevertheless, made some attempt at a metrical version of the famous mountain journey of Martino, Charlemagne's guide across the Alps, and of the first chorus in the third act of "Adelchi," which are here subjoined*.

* Adelchi, Act iii., Scene iii.

I.

"The King of the Franks, on his march to the conquest of Italy, is arrested at the foot of that Alpine barrier, which Nature in vain reared up for the protection of that fated country. The ardour of the monarch and of his host slackens in sight of that trackless, measureless waste. Already Charles is waving his sceptre to give the signal for raising the camp, determined on abandoning the arduous enterprise, when an obscure Latin Monk, by name Martino, an envoy of Pope Adrian I., the instigator of the French invasion, having stolen through the Lombard encampment, and confiding himself to the guidance of Providence, ventures across that mountain wilderness, and stands suddenly before the King.

MARTINO.

God blinded them, God led my way! Their camp
I left unnoted, and retraced my steps;
Northward I bent my course; by paths untrodden
I moved throughout a solitary vale,
Widening and lengthening as I went:—here grazed
A few stray flocks and herds.—It was the last
Abode of man!—That night the herdsman's hut
Offered me rest and hospitable cheer.
With early dawn I rose, and of my host
I asked the road to France.—"Beyond those hills
Are other hills," he said, "and others further,
And far, far off is France;—but road there's none.
By thousands lie those hills, bleak, bare, and steep,
By none but spectres tenanted; no man
Has ventured there!"—"Manifold are God's ways,
Far beyond all man's ways," was my reply,
"And God sends me."—"And God thee guide!" quoth he.
Hence, of the bread his scanty store supplied,
The goodman filled for me a pilgrim's wallet,
And loaded me therewith—Heaven's best blessings
On him I then invoked, and went my way.

My way along a mountain border led,
A huge black mass far stretched athwart the vale;

To this I came, and, with good trust in God,
Attained the height.—Here nothing more was seen
Of man or of his works; but stately firs
Drawn up in giant, dense, primeval forests,
And lawless streams, and dark, impervious dells,
A holy, deep, an overawing silence,
Unbroken;—I listened to my steps—I started—
As, from beneath my feet a thousand fathoms,
The mountain torrent roared unseen—I started,
As, with a sudden shriek, the winged plunderer,
Bound on his morning cruise, rushed from his eyrie,
And darted over my head; or as I heard,
Touched by the noontide sun crackling and rustling,
The ripening cones beneath the dark, dull foliage
Of the wild pine.—Three days I journeyed on,
Three nights my lone couch were the drifted leaves,
With which the northern blast had strewn my path.
The sun my guide;—with him I rose; with him,
From east to west, through hill and dale, at random
I journeyed on.—The more I went, the more
The Alps about seemed swelling; right and left.
In front, all round they rose; now mighty peaks
Like pitched tents or lofty pyramids,
From end to end all snow; now sable ridges,
Like castle walls or battlemented bulwarks,
Frowning from all their cliffs.—The sun was low,
And the third night set in, when th' eastern side
I reached of this wide range, on whose last boundary
Thine host encamps.—A ray of hope awoke me
With morn's new-opening smiles; once more refreshed
I set about my task. The mount was climbed,
I stood upon its summit.—'Tis the same
That thou mayst see cleaving the clouds of Heaven,
Sharp as the keen edge of thy battle-axe,
Yonder, O King;—but there, a lovely plain
All smooth, it was, all garlanded with pines,
No track on its green turf.—Soon as I was
Upon that hallowed ground, incessant, deep,
Winding its way through the deserted space,
A murmur met my ear.—I stood and listened,
I held my breath—'Twas not the mountain rill
Dashing from crag to crag—'twas not the gale
Breaking from grove to grove in howls and groans

To wake the dormant storms. It was indeed
The voice of life—it was a lingering sound
Of words and works; an undistinguished music
Of shouting, neighing, tramping; an immense
Stirring of men!—My pulse was thrilled, my tread
Methought grew lighter as the sound grew nearer.
I gained the utmost brow—down on the vale
I cast a hasty glance, and—on my knees
I broke, before the Lord, in hymns of praise—
For lo! there Israel's sacred tents arose,
The long-desired host of the Lord's anointed!

II.

"Charlemagne and his host have almost miraculously been led through unknown paths across the Alps. The Lombard armies are seized by the panic of sudden surprise. The cowardly defection of some of the feudal lords of that nation hasten the downfal of the fated dynasty of Alboin. The two kings, Desiderius and Adelchis, with the scattered remnants of their forces, seek their refuge within the walls of Pavia and Verona. The enslaved Latin, or native Italian, population, after two centuries not yet thoroughly schooled to their yoke, are now suddenly aroused from their long state of dejection by the tidings of the ruin of their masters. The Chorus, who are made to utter the poet's mind, raise their solemn, ominous voice, to undeceive them from their fond expectation.

THE CHORUS.

From moss-grown fanes, from tottering halls,
From their burnt forges' clanging walls,
Forth from their fields' half-furrowed soil
Bathed with the drops of bondmen's toil;
Roused into life by sudden start,
The trampled race of Italy,
With anxious ear and bounding heart,
Awake and listen tremblingly.
From their pale brows and cowering eyes,
Like sunbeams from the clouded skies,
Still flashes forth the manly glance

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Of their forefathers' countenance;
In those dark eyes and pallid brows,
The vaunt of that long bygone age,
More deep, alas! more glaring shows
The brand of present vassalage.

Through winding paths, with faltering tread,
And hearts that beat 'twixt hope and dread,
The gathering Latin crowd advance;—
And lo! before the host of France
They see there fly the scattered hordes
Of their relentless northern lords.—
Adown the plain, with slackened rein,
Like hunted beasts with bristling mane,
They see them panting seek their lair;
And there, all mute in fallen pride,
The stately matrons, terrified,
Gaze on their sons with vacant stare.
And right and left, like loosened packs,
In hot pursuit upon their tracks,
There ride the conquering knights of France.—
They see—and flushed with sudden trance,
Deceived by hope's new dawning ray,
They fondly hail the coming day—
The day of their deliverance.
But hark! those brave victorious bands,
That chase your lords with eager brands,
Have roamed and ridden wide and far;
Up from their couches' sweet repose,
Up from their nightly feasts they rose,
As sudden sang the trump of war.
Lone in their castle-halls bereft,
Their fainting dames in tears they left,
On whose pale lips the farewell died:
The crested helmet o'er their brow,
They pressed their chargers' saddle-bow,
And down the hollow bridge did ride.

From land to land, in joyous throngs,
They cheered their way with warlike songs;
'Long trackless dales and rugged heights
They watched the long, inclement nights;
Whilst far their longing hearts still roved
Back to their homes, to all they loved.

The martial rule, the toilsome march,
And frosts that pierce, and heats that parch,
And famine drear they next endure.
The shock of lances couched in rest,
And rattling shafts on mailed breast,
They learnt to bide with front secure.
And all these toils, these dangers past,
Should have no better meed at last,
Than turn the course of destiny,
An alien race of serfs to free?—
Back then, ye doomed, deluded crowd,
To your burnt forges, ruins proud,
Back to the furrows of your soil,
Bathed with the drops of bondmen's toil!
Victor and vanquished join their hands,
They rest upon your blood-stained lands,
The stirring trump of war is hushed,
They share the spoil of victory;
Beneath a double yoke are crushed
The trampled race of Italy!

Greater poetical beauties are, however, found in the second chorus of the same tragedy, "Adelchi," of which we shall only attempt a literal translation in prose.

Ermengarda, daughter of Desiderio, sister of Adelchi, the last king of the Lombards, sent back to her father's home after the heartless repudiation of her royal husband, Charles of France, dies broken-hearted, just as the Lombard throne is tottering to its foundation; she is expiring at Brescia, in the arms of her sister, in the monastery of St. Salvator, where she had taken up her last shelter. A chorus of nuns are made, rather vaguely, to give expression to the poet's own thoughts.

"With her soft fair tresses loose on her panting breast, with slackened hands, and her white countenance overspread with the dew of death, there the pious one reclines, her swimming gaze seeking for Heaven's light.

"The lamentation stops short: a unanimous prayer

soars heavenwards—a gentle hand, lighting on that marble brow, stretches the last curtain upon the blue lustreless eyes.

"Banish, O gentle being, all earthly passions from thy anxious mind: lift up thy thought, as an offering to the Eternal Father, and die—beyond this life only is the end of thy long martyrdom.

"Such was the immovable fate of the sad sufferer. Ever to long for oblivion, ever to long in vain; and ascend to the God of the Holy, hallowed by her trial of sorrow.

"Alas! in sleepless darkness, along the lonely cloisters, amidst the virgin melodies, at the foot of the sacred altar, ever did the un-recalled days again spring up in her thought;

"The day, when still beloved, unconscious of the treacherous time to come, she breathed entranced the vivid air of the French shores, and stepped forward, an envied bride, among the Salic maidens.

"When from a hill, high in the air, her fair tresses sparkling with gems, she beheld the busy chase swarming on the plain; and the long-haired monarch bowing to his horse's main.

"And close on his steps, the throng of reeking coursers and the rushing and the wheeling of the panting hounds, and the bristling wild-boar goaded out of the beaten thickets.

"But when, struck by the royal dart, the huge monster was seen streaking with blood the trampled dust, the tender bride, pale with lovely terror, hid her face in the throng of her damsels.

"Oh! the wandering Meuse! Oh, the warm springs of Aix! Where the sovereign warrior laid down his glittering mail, and alighted to refresh his brow, heated by the wild sport of the field!

"Soft as the dew, on the bush of withered flowers, in-

fuses new life into the burning stems, so that they rise in the mild hour of dawn, once more clad in their native verdure;

"Even so the refreshing sound of friendly exhortation sinks gently into that tumult of thoughts, which the cruel storm-blast of passion aroused, and diverts the heart to the calm bliss of a purer love.

"But even as the sun, as it rises on its fiery path, pours down all the incessant influence of his overpowering beams, and once more burns down to the ground those slender stems,

"With equal swiftness, from that faint oblivion, the half-lulled passion again rises, unquenchable, and storms the affrighted reason, and calls back the wandering images to their wonted sorrow.

"Banish, O thou gentle being, all earthly desires from thy weary mind. Lift up thy thought, as an offering to the God of mercy, and die. Beneath this ground, in this land which is to afford rest to thy tender spoil,

"Other unhappy ones are slumbering in death; brides 'reft by the sword, virgins in vain betrothed, mothers whose sons, mortally wounded, were discoloured by the last pang, in their embrace;

"Thou, born of the guilty oppressors' race, whose bravery was in their numbers, whose right was outrage and bloodshed, whose vaunt was ruthless ferocity,

"Thou wert by a provident fate ranked among the oppressed: die then, lamented, and calmly descend to rest by their side. Upon thy guiltless remains no harsh word shall be spoken.

"Die, and let thy bloodless countenance settle in peace; let thy look be as it was, when, unconscious of a deceitful future, it expressed none but the purest maidenly thoughts.

"Thus does the setting sun tear himself from the sundered clouds, and, behind the hill, tinges with his evening purple the warm western horizon,—an omen to the pious husbandman of a brighter day."

Yet the noblest thoughts of this gentlest of Italian bards will be found in the poesy of his youth—in those *Inni Sacri*, which first gave clear evidence of his rising genius in Italy. It was certainly remarkable that such a style of poetry should be cultivated at that period. It was not long since Napoleon, at a loss for some new farce to entertain the populace of the *faubourgs* with, had ventured on the very doubtful policy, of reproducing the Mass on the High Altar of Notre Dame of Paris, when one of his generals assured him, that *la pièce serait sifflée;* the *Concordat* with the new pope had hardly been signed, and the Catholic church was not yet wholly recalled into being, when a young believer in Cisalpine Milan was turning all his energies upon the illustration of its chief solemnities. The ascetic Odes on "Christmas," "Good Friday," "Easter-day," "Whitsuntide," and the "Name of Mary," are not, indeed, church hymns; they could hardly be set to music. Nothing could be more at variance with the simple and tender English melodies in which Watts and Doddridge distinguished themselves, than the lofty strains of prophetic language that Manzoni chose to publish under the same name. These poems are strictly Catholic in their bearing, yet they contain hardly any thing the most consistent Protestant could honestly and reasonably object to. The effect they have upon the reader is analogous to the magic sensation wrought upon us by a stately peal of a deep organ in a vast Gothic minster. It acts on the nerves even more than the mind. The charm resides in the loftiness of measure and rhyme, in the happy application of the familiar, yet ever-amazing scriptural language, in the warmth of true love that glows throughout every line. It speaks to our senses, as if the words conveyed no meaning, but acted magnetically. It will affect the sceptic hardly less than the warmest believer, as it appeals to the instinct of God, which no speciousness of cold reasoning can root out of man's heart. Unfortunately, language, as in all lyrical

effusions, is here so decidedly the essence of the thought itself, that we hardly know how our tame reproduction of Manzoni's images into English prose will bear us out in our exalted opinion of his performance.

We will not, however, hesitate to submit to our readers a version of the "*Pentecoste;* or Descent of the Holy Ghost;" for we are confident that these hymns are either not read, or but imperfectly understood in this country, and our humble efforts may, perhaps, serve to call upon them the attention of persons more fit to do them justice.

"WHITSUNTIDE.

"Mother of the saints, thou image on earth of the Heavenly Jerusalem, thou eternal keeper of the incorruptible blood, thou for so many centuries, suffering, fighting, praying: who unfoldest thy tents from sea to sea;

"Thou camp of all who live in hope, church of the living God, where wert thou? What corner of the earth sheltered thee, when thy King, dragged to die on the hill, purpled the sods from his sublime altar,

"And when the divine Spoil, issuing from darkness, uttered the powerful breath of its second life; and when, bearing in his hand the price of redemption, he soared from this earthly dust up to the Father's throne,

"Thou, the sharer of his death-groan, conscious of his mysteries, Immortal Daughter of his victory, where wert thou? Only alive to thy danger, only safe in thy obscurity, thou soughtest the refuge of the humblest abode —until that sacred day;

"When the regenerating Spirit descended upon thee, when it lit in thy hand the unquenchable torch, placed thee on the hill-top as a beacon to the nations, and broke open the flood of the word from thy lips,

"Even as the rapid light showers down from object to

object, and elicits the various colours wherever it rests, so did the manifold voice of the Spirit resound: the Arab, the Parthian, the Syrian, each heard it in his own tongue.

* * * * *

"Wherefore doth the slave sigh as she kisses her babes, and gaze with envy at the breast that suckles the free-born? She knows then not that the Lord raises the humblest into his glory, that he thought in his agony of all the children of Eve.

"The Heavens proclaim a new freedom, new nations, new conquests, new glory won in nobler conflicts, a new peace unshaken by terrors or by vain seductions, a peace that the world scoffs at but cannot take away.

"Behold, O Spirit! suppliant before thy lofty altars, alone in gloomy forests, wandering in desert seas; from the snowy Andes to Lebanon, from Hibernia to the rugged Haiti, dispersed through every shore, but with one heart in Thee,

"We implore thee—peaceable Spirit, descend once more, benignant to thy worshippers, benignant to the benighted heathens that know thee not: descend and re-create; revive our hearts numbed by doubt, and let the victor be the divine reward of the vanquished.

"Descend, thou Love! Crush proud passions in our soul: inspire us with thoughts that the conscious final day may not change; let thy fostering virtue improve and strengthen thy gift, even as the sun developes the blossom in its inert germ,

"Which blossom, nevertheless, would yet die in its inertness, and never unfold the pride of its fulgent hues, unless the same mild radiance of the sun, the unweary nourisher, no less than giver of life, were to rain down its blissful influence from the sky.

"We implore thee, descend! A fanning breeze, a consoling air into the drooping thoughts of the unhappy; a

whirlwind into the elated thoughts of the violent: breathe into them a feeling of dismay that may incline him to mercy.

"Let the poor lift up his eyes to Heaven, his heritage, think in whose image he was made, and turn his sorrow into joy: let those on whom earthly gifts were amply bestowed amply bestow them on others, but with that modest silence, with that friendly mien, which enhance the value of the gift.

"Breathe, O Spirit, from the ineffable smile of our children, overspread with chaste blushes the blooming cheeks of our maidens: bestow thy pure joys on the virgin inmates of the cloister, hallow with modesty the tender love of our brides.

"Temper with prudence the confident spirit of our youth, bear up manly purpose to an infallible aim, crown our gray hairs with holy desires, shine in the wandering look of those who die in hope."

We shall conclude this chapter by a translation of the "Ode on the Death of Napoleon." We are aware that several English versions of this masterpiece, in different metres, already exist. If we add one more to the number, it is only because we are persuaded that, by a stricter adherence to the original measure, we have, with a little more pains, endeavoured to give our own verse a closer resemblance to the original.

It is a subject on which the whole galaxy of poets, who illustrated the late generation, have exhausted their powers. It is, nevertheless, remarkable that the country who produced the hero, should also give birth to the bard whose Dirge will reach the remotest posterity with him.

THE FIFTH OF MAY, 1821.

No more!—as senseless, motionless,
Th' unconscious frame was left,
Of life's last breath, at once, and of
So great a spirit reft,

So, by the tidings overcome,
The earth lies awe-struck, dumb;
Dumb as it muses on the last
  Hour of that Man of Fate,
Nor knows how slowly years must roll,
  And seasons alternate,
Ere such another footstep may
Tread on its blood-stained clay.

High, above earth's thrones, silently
  My genius saw him sank,
It watched him, as, with fortune's tide,
  He fell, he rose, he sank;
Nor with the crowds that cursed and praised
Its voice was ever raised.
Pure from degrading homage, pure
  From outrage baser yet,
It follows now with startled gaze
  That sun for ever set;
And o'er the urn breathes forth a dirge,
Safe from oblivion's surge.

From Alpine height to pyramid,
  Where Rhine and Tagus roam,
Where'er his lightning flash'd, the bolt
  Unerringly struck home;
From Scylla to the Don remote,
Earth's boundaries it smote.
Was it true glory?—judgment rests
  With some yet unborn race,
We to the Maker bow who thus
  Vouchsafed more deep to trace
The stamp of his creative mind
In one of Adam's kind.

The stormy, wild, entrancing joy
  Of a high-soaring scheme,
The thirst for empire, long a vague,
  Unutterable dream;
Th' unswerving march to reach a scope
'Twas madness but to hope;

His heart tried all—the race for fame,
The hard-won short repose,
Alternate flight and victory,
The throne, the exile's woes;
Twice in the dust trod down with scorn,
Twice on the altars borne.

His word was law—in hostile ranks
The Present and the Past
Stood muster'd up: the contest was
To Him referr'd at last.
He sat an umpire—at his hest
Both Ages lay at rest.
He vanish'd.—In the meanest isle
His journey's close he found,
By deepest pity there pursued,
And hate no less profound;
By love no fear could quell, by rage
No length of time assuage.

As on the shipwreck'd mariner
The whelming waters weigh,
The waters, o'er whose far expanse
He held so wide a sway,
As yet he strove with anxious eye
A saving shore to spy.
So did the load of memory
Sink heavy on that soul:
How oft to men he long'd his breast's
Deep secret to unroll,
And on the page indelible
His hand o'ermaster'd fell.

How often, as the evening shade
Crept on his lingering days,
With folded arms, with downcast eyes
Shorn of their flashing rays,
Hard-wrestling with the past he stood
In speechless solitude.

And with the camp's fast-shifting scenes
His busy fancy swarm'd,
With glittering ranks, with waving horse,
With tow'ring ramparts storm'd;
With hasty words of stern commands,
Outsped by eager bands.

Ah! writhing in long agony,
Sore was that spirit tried,
To dark despair—when, provident,
A hand from Heaven hied,
To waft him gently into fair
Regions of purer air.
Along Hope's flow'ry paths, where fields
Of endless green extend,
Where purest joys, ineffable,
Our utmost wish transcend,
Where earthly fame and pageant fade
In silence and in shade.

Undying, glorious, blissful faith,
With signs of victory crown'd,
Add yet one chaplet—raise once more
Thy loud, triumphant sound,
To Golgotha's disgrace so proud
A spirit never bow'd.
Oh! round those weary ashes, thou
All hostile passions smooth,
The God that prostrates and uplifts,
Whose hand can vex and soothe,
Upon that pillow desolate,
In mercy by him sate.

CHAPTER IV.

GROSSI.

Italian Romance—Ortis—Historical Novel—Rosini—Varese—Grossi—Guerrazzi—D'Azeglio.

THE novel of Manzoni could only with difficulty make its way to popular favour in Italy. The first feeling it aroused in the hearts of his countrymen was a disappointment from which they have hardly yet thoroughly recovered.

"What patriotic object," they asked, "could the novelist propose to himself when he made a monk and a cardinal his favourite heroes: when in an enlightened though oppressed country, in the age of Galileo and Sarpi, he found no greatness, no virtue, but under the cowl or the mitre? Why did he choose his subject out of a period of oppression and woe? Does history tell nothing of Italy but reverses? or has she no reverses unmixed with disgrace? or did he think that ancient disgrace could atone for present abjectness? or did he wish to reconcile his country to her present abjectness by the despairing conviction, that such has always been, such must always be her doom?"

With far more limited powers, other novelists in Italy have better divined their times.

Romance, in that country, as elsewhere, is, in the present age, the most popular literature. In the land where Boccaccio, and his predecessors and followers, first intro-

duced a kind of narrative which they probably imported from the lively fictions of eastern story-tellers—where Bojardo and Ariosto first clothed the rude legends of Northern minstrelsy in the ineffable charms of their melodious language—Romance was almost extinct, ever since the close of the sixteenth century. To that poetical rage which crowded the shelves of Italian libraries with several thousand volumes of chivalro-epic poems — or rhythmical romances *in ottava rima*—(readers familiar with Italian literature know that this is no exaggeration) weariness succeeded, and surfeit. Chivalrous epopée was superseded by amorous lyrics. Petrarch reasserted his ascendancy over Ariosto and Tasso. The Arcadians of the seventeenth century published thousands of volumes of sonnets, which, if they had no greater merit than the stanzas of their predecessors, were, at least, more shortly written, and sooner read and forgotten.

In the following century, the English novelists of the age of Fielding and Richardson, notwithstanding Italian translations of their works being published, and their heroines brought on the Italian stage, exercised little or no influence on the Italian mind; neither did the pseudo-philosophical school, nor the sentimental school which flourished in France shortly before the Revolution, find many followers on the southern side of the Alps. With the exception of the "Novelle dell'abate Chiari," and other vapid and prosy productions in that style, which attained a certain degree of popularity, Italy, in the eighteenth century, hardly possessed a work of fiction worth notice.

But, during the French invasion, a man was born on board a Venetian man-of-war, destined to feel in a high degree, and forcibly to depict, those passions by which the bosoms of his countrymen were kindled during the appalling events of that memorable era. "Jacopo Ortis" is an eminently Italian romance. It is in fact the only work in

the language intended as a delineation of national character. It is true that Ugo Foscolo only gave his own features for a portraiture of his hero. Like Alfieri, Byron, and other egotists of modern times, he was so full of himself, that every object around seemed imbued with his own thoughts and feelings. But fortunately Foscolo's character was no bad specimen of an Italian mind and heart during the momentous crisis, of which he was, by no means an idle spectator. All that Foscolo was, bating the gloss and refinement—the paint and tinsel by which a hero must be set off for stage effect—was also "Jacopo Ortis."

Written in a manly, rich, imaginative style, such as is seldom found among Italian prose writers—conceived with a unity of purpose, plan, and action worthy of the best age of ancient classicism—redundant with genuine high-wrought feeling, such as might well shame the maudlin sentimentality of modern romanticism—"Jacopo Ortis" is, we think, far superior to the kindred German production, "The Sorrows of Werter," with which it had long to contend for the palm of priority. With little or no action, with just as few episodes as can cast some light on the gloomy character of the protagonist, the romance proceeds towards its unavoidable catastrophe—a mere outline of a wayward and gloomy, but still at times lofty and noble soul—the dissection of a proud and stubborn, but also manly and generous, heart.

"Jacopo Ortis" has been considered as an immoral book, being truly little better than a vindication of suicide. Every letter he writes, every word he utters, is evidently made to bear on that long-premeditated crime. The dagger hovers before him amidst the flowers and verdure of his Euganean hills—among the joys of the ruddy peasantry, whose festivals he consents to grace with his presence: the thought of death mingles itself with the warmest expansions of his beneficent nature, with the

very ecstasy of a first kiss of love. And yet we do not think Ortis had in Italy the same pernicious effect that Werter is said to have produced in Germany. Life has, in the south, too many charms for any book to render suicide a fashionable monomania; and, independent of its tragical conclusion, we rather incline to believe that Foscolo's romance exercised a most beneficial influence, in as far as it roused his countrymen from that effeminacy into which, after the restoration of the peace, they were but too prone to relapse. It taught them to cherish virtue, even though inseparably wedded to sorrow and evil—even though apparently abandoned by Heaven and Earth.

Notwithstanding the popularity enjoyed by that work in Italy and abroad *, it never boasted a numerous school of imitators. The earliest productions of Defendente Sacchi and the short tragic tales of Davide Bertolotti, are, indeed, rather written after the models of Arnaut, the French sentimentalist, than in the stern and nervous style of Ortis. Their "Pianta dei Sospiri" and "Cimitero dei Cipressi," and other pretty romances with lugubrious titles, after lingering for one or two seasons on the toilet-table of the Milanese beauties, were at last thrown aside amidst the yawns of unconquerable ennui.

But we have seen that, not long after the close of revolutionary wars, together with a flood of various productions of ultra-montane literature, the Waverley novels made their way into Italy. The translations of Scott's works by Gaetano Barbieri and Pompeo Ferrario of Milan, executed with rare skill, though, at first, with little or no knowledge of English, contributed in a high degree to hasten the acclimation of those Caledonian narratives. The first of Scott's translators was the ami-

* "Jacopo Ortis" has been very lately re-translated into French by a no less popular writer than Alexandre Dumas.

able and talented Pietro Borsieri, who published the "Antiquary" before 1820. His task was hardly completed, when he was involved in the fate of the Editors of the "Conciliatore," a literary work intended to reconcile men of all parties to unanimity and brotherly love; one of the most harmless publications that ever saw the light of day, but in which Austria apprehended treasonable designs. Borsieri, together with Confalonieri and Pellico, was sent to Spielberg, there to *reconcile* himself to hard bread and greasy broth, and to the knitting of woollen stockings; and the task of translating Scott devolved upon others of his less unfortunate townsmen. But new versions and editions of Scott's works, in prose as well as in verse, were reproduced in almost every town of the Peninsula; and for several years the "Ariosto of the North" had nearly weaned that southern people from the perusal of their brilliant and copious national literature. In the train of the Scottish bard, Cooper, Bulwer, and others of his imitators, invaded Italy. Nor could it be long, with these impulses in the public mind, before admiration yielded to imitation.

Eager readers as we are of historical novels, we profess ourselves no admirers of this style of composition. We love—and who does not?—we love the works of imagination. We revere the privileged man, upon whose mind God has bestowed so keen and active a sense of the beautiful, that its contemplation will lead to imperishable reproduction, will enable the gifted being to encroach upon the prerogatives of the Divinity, and taste the ineffable joy of creation. We delight in romance, as we love to look upon painting and sculpture; but we pity the man whose senses are so miserably palled and blunted by long indulgence in the morbid extravagances of modern fiction, as to have lost all relish for the bare charms of sober historical narrative; just as we would commiserate him who had doated so long on the gaudy beauties of a painted

Venus, as to have no eyes left for the living countenance of a lovely woman in flesh and blood.

A man who dealt all his lifetime in works of imagination, Byron, has felt and acknowledged it. Truth is more strange, and, he might have added, more grand and beautiful, than fiction. What Art is to Nature, is Romance to History. Novels or dramas, the contrivance of mortal understanding, cannot rank by the side of the annals of mankind—the work of that Supreme Intelligence which the Greeks called "the Poet of Heaven and Earth."

Walter Scott and the school of his imitators, English or Italian, felt the self-evidence of this great truth; and, in order to lead their readers back to a love for history, they resorted to that amphibious production, that worst of all works of fiction, acceptable only as a transitional contrivance—the Historical Novel.

This style of writing is indeed no novelty. Homer, Virgil, and Tasso, wrote historical romances in verse; "Ivanhoe" is an epic poem in prose; but epopées were intended as a substitute for history, ere history existed. Men sang before they could write or print. Homer led the way to Herodotus—the bard to the chronicler; but in this age of deep research, of sedate erudition, wherefore these free versions, these parodies of history? What can the poet hope by mythologising on well-defined historical events? Whence this mistrust of the natural attractions of that *True*, which alone is the *Beautiful?* Whence this necessity of improving on the designs of Providence?—of

> "Intesser fregi *al Vero*, ornando in parte,
> D'altri diletti che de *suoi* le carte;"

or, in good English, of trifling and tampering with truth?

It may, indeed, be that poetry, exhausted in its finite resources, may in a less imaginative epoch be compelled to rely on the accessory cooperation of positive knowledge; and that, for instance, the love-romance of Roland Græme

and Catherine Seyton might fail in interesting the readers of "The Abbot," unless supported by the great historical importance attached to the personage of Mary Stuart—and in that case human society would have reached the utmost stage of Platonic Utopia, and grown too wise for poetry. But, however the *Ideal* may have need of a close alliance with the *Real*, truth can certainly derive no advantage from being wedded to fiction. History will always be more interesting than historical romance, if men only know how to write and read it.

"Oh!" answer the publishers, "historical publications do not attract the attention of the thousand and one boarding-school misses, who patronise a Circulating Library." What! is not a powerful writer more than a match for a thousand and one boarding-school misses? Is not a man of genius intended to be in advance of his age—to force it after his own views—to wean it from its unsound predilections? The vulgar mass of readers delight not in history. True! But did ever any man of supreme intellect, any poet, attempt to write history? Did ever any eagle-eyed bard cast a vivifying glance on the past, and lay its image, misty and shadowy perhaps, but not the less moving and breathing, before us? History has, hitherto, been merely the work of plodding erudition or cold political speculation—the production of the scholar or philosopher, not of the poet. Poets, as yet, only deal in historical romances—they dare not write the romance of history; and yet an historical novel is but an imperfect attempt to poetise history. A cursory glance at any of the best specimens of that style of composition (say, for example, "The Abbot," which we have mentioned) will easily satisfy us that its main beauties are not of a romantic, but of an historical cast. We feel, as we read, how, notwithstanding the masterly skill of the inventor, the progress of the historical action is impaired by the encumbrance of more or less incongruous episodes; whilst the interest which would

naturally be awakened by the romantic situation of accessorial personages is almost entirely destroyed by the crushing weight of the real heroes with which they are so improvidently brought into juxtaposition.

To say, with Tasso, that mankind must, like grown children, be allowed to swallow the salutary lessons of truth by the skilful admixture of poetical imagery, is to entertain no very high opinion either of the omnipotence of the medicine, or of the docility of the patient; and the writer who lays his hope of success on that old nursery stratagem, can only obtain the applause of an illiterate crowd, whose infantile imbecility enables them not to detect the deception; but with minds of a more disciplined cast, with men more conversant with the subject, the slightest deviation from incontrovertible facts, the most trifling anachronism or inconsistency—even the least attempt to fill up by plausible conjectures the irreparable blanks with which time has providentially dotted the annals of the past—must have the effect of immediately breaking that illusion, without which works of imagination can have no charms for us.

But, if historical novels may be justly considered as injurious to the literary purposes, neither will they be found to answer any better the great moral objects, of history. Not that the historiographer may not, as well as the novel-writer, pervert facts and make them subservient to his own peculiar views; but the former, from the very importance and dignity of his office, is at least amenable to the severest visitations of criticism, whilst the latter, whenever convicted of the grossest violations of truth, entrenches himself behind Horace's latitudinarianism, and arrogates the privilege of telling his story after his own fashion, without the faintest shade of responsibility *.

* . . . . . Pictoribus atque poetis,
Quidlibet audendi semper fuit æqua potestas.

Thus Walter Scott did not hesitate to brand Conrad of Montferrat with deeds of the darkest treason, merely that the brilliant valour of his lion-hearted hero might be enhanced by the contrast; and Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer had no scruple to exaggerate the vices and crimes of the Italian race in an age in which it still displayed so much of its vitality, the better to elevate his idol Rienzi. A man well versed in historical lore may read similar misrepresentations with a sceptic shrug of the shoulders; but the mass of ignorant readers, who derive their information from no better sources, are apt to contract from their Scotts and Bulwers erroneous impressions, which no effect of subsequent discipline may have power to eradicate.

History is, for us, a grand edifice, sublime in its shapeless disorder, venerable in its chasms and ruins, stately in its darkness and stillness, deriving a fantastic solemnity, assuming gigantic dimensions from the very mist of time through which we contemplate it. We can never, indeed, be too diligent in clearing all doubts that the ignorance of dark ages has left in the memorials of the past; we can never be too eloquent or too poetical in our description of the heart-stirring events with which the annals of bygone generations are teeming; but when we arrive at a blank which the utmost ingenuity of laborious erudition is at a loss to fill up—when truth evades all the labour of critical inquiry—oh! then, to attempt to remove uncertainty by plausible conjecture, "to render connected," as Sir Lytton Bulwer suggests, "and clear the most broken fragments of our annals by the *liberal use of analogical hypotheses*," appears to us as idle a wish as that of the honest citizen who described the Roman Colosseum as "a remarkably fine old building, but very much out of repair," and proposed to wall up its dilapidated remnants by a patchwork of modern masonry.

These unphilosophical endeavours to robe the venerable vestiges of historical tradition in the tawdry finery of

modern romanticism are the more to be regretted, as they are more at variance with the real tendencies of the earnest inquisitive age we live in. Whilst all the labours of modern criticism evidently aim at stripping history of all mythological interpolation, does it not appear rather strange that the school of Walter Scott should have no better object than to throw the annals of the past back into the chaos from which they are only beginning to emerge? History, however, far from losing any of its *prestige* from an erudite pruning of all heterogeneous growth, acquires new interest from being left to its own resources. For if its noblest and worthiest office is, after all, to lay before our gaze the most affecting scenes of antiquity, intended to rouse us from our native listlessness and apathy, there is but little doubt that, to this effect, the most uncontroverted statement of positive facts will be more immediately conducive than the over-strained effusions of fictitious narrative—because, against emotions resulting from imaginary or even questionable catastrophes, the natural indocility of man may find a ready refuge in the stronghold of sneering scepticism; but he will not so easily resist the urgent upbraiding of glaring truth, reflecting in the mirror of departed greatness the humiliating image of his present degeneracy.

Let only the poet undertake to write history. Let a man of profound and vigorous genius, penetrated with a religious feeling of veneration for truth, assume the high and *new* office of an imaginative historian. Sismondi and Michaud on the Continent, Carlyle in England, have shown, to some extent, how history can be arrayed in almost as attractive a dress as poetry. Nothing is more calculated to rouse the fancy and warm the heart than this great biographer of the human species—this registrar of the errors and follies, of the perpetual contradictions of man.

Next to the unhallowed and dangerous, but irresistible, desire of exploring the mysteries of the future, human

curiosity is naturally led to sound the scarcely less unfathomable gulf of the Past; and the Past itself is pregnant with warnings and conjectures for the Future; and from every volume of history—as from the coffin of the wizard of chivalrous legends—there issues the fatidical voice of the Prophet.

But, in order that it may claim a right to these noble functions, history must not only divest itself of all illiberal prepossessions, but it must indulge in no gratuitous assertions; for, whenever it trespasses against well-authenticated facts, or even attempts to substantiate dubious and shadowy evidence, it betrays incapacity of giving the subject sufficient charm without the meretricious adornment of episodical interest; it shows inability of working on our imagination, without bewildering our judgment.

The poetical beauty to which history is entitled to aspire, must be derived from intrinsic, not from adventitious sources; it must be a beauty of form, not of drapery —of design, not of colouring; it must have all the chasteness, the accuracy, and high finish of sculpture, in order to possess all its majesty and sublimity—its endless durability; and the insertion of spurious ornaments, such as are lavished upon it by the imitators of the Bard of Abbotsford, will have no better effect than the eyes of painted glass, which the Greek and Roman sculptors of an age of decline enchased in the heads of classic statues, with a hope of adding expression to the calm and severe features of the heroes of antiquity.

If we have dwelt so long on the inexpediency of historical novels, and so explicitly expressed our opinion of the false, and consequently ephemeral, character of that style of writing, it is because, after the success of Manzoni, the Italians have launched with great eagerness into that style of composition which is not, as they pretend, indigenous, and will never, perhaps, be fully naturalised.

Professor Rosini, of Pisa, a dull, but indefatigable writer,

indignant at the idea of a Scotch poet laying any claim to the invention of historical romance, contends, in his preface to "Louisa Strozzi," that that kind of composition was originally Italian.

"My intent was," he writes, "to *revive* historical romance. This style of writing is not only originally an Italian contrivance, but it constitutes one of the greatest ornaments of our literature. See the 'Istoria d' Ippolito Buondelmonte, e d'Eleonora de Bardi,' dated 1471, and 'I Reali di Francia,' published twenty years later at Modena; in both of which historical events are interwoven with fictitious episodes. See, above all, 'Le Avventure di Giulietta e Romeo,' by Luigi di Porto; a tale which had elicited many tears in the original Italian, long before it appeared dramatised before an English audience." Rosini proceeds to class the tales of the Decameron, those of Sacchetti, and others, among historical novels; quoting also the "Avventuroso Siciliano," written in 1311.

All this is to little purpose. All the "Novelle Boccaccesche" and "Poemi Cavallereschi" had ceased in Italy altogether, and Rosini's own works and those of his countrymen might perhaps never have arisen without the impulse given to the European mind by the recent, and, to some extent, new models of Scott.

Giovanni Rosini, a man of various accomplishments, an Italian *Litterato* of the old school, gifted with a rare versatility of talent, has long been an ornament to the oldest University of Tuscany. Under the appearances of an easy and almost Epicurean life, the good Professor, grown to an alarming degree of obesity, receiving his visitors in bed even after twelve o'clock at noon, finds however time, not only to discharge his professional duties with the greatest credit to himself, and to the Institution he belongs to, but is even now composing a splendid "History of Painting," which bids fair to be ranked among the standard works of modern Italian literature.

His fancy, nothing fettered by the weight and torpor of an overgrown frame, is sufficiently buoyant to wing its flight into the regions of poetry and romance; and, as we have observed, the worthy professor would have no strong objection to be hailed as the restorer of historical novels in Italy. He had conceived the idea of a composition in that style, he contends, and communicated his plan to a lady of his acquaintance, as early as 1808; the title of his novel, unpublished to this day, was "Erasmus." That first *abozzo* remains, however, a formless embryo among his papers; and the "Monaca di Monza," the first work with which the author actually came before the world in the character of a novelist, being, in fact, only a sequel to Manzoni's romance, can give him no claims to a priority of publication *.

The "Monaca di Monza" is, like its prototype, sadly deficient in general interest. A runaway nun and her seducer succeed in making their escape from Milan; and, by the aid of a disguise and assumed names, establish themselves in Tuscany. Wealth and good manners enable them to appear at the court of Medici, and to mix with the highest classes of that polished community. The great bulk of the story is little better than a handbook, or guide to the palaces, galleries, and other *lions* of Florence and the neighbourhood, such as they then were. Men, with names familiar to every reader—among others, blind old Galileo—are brought upon the stage apparently for the mere purpose of shaking hands with the guilty but fashionable pair. Then the formidable pestilence of 1622 breaks out at Florence, as in the rest of Italy, and, its ravages having swept away all those who might have a more direct interest in the detection and prosecution of the fugitives, they determine to travel back to Lombardy, with a view to

* "La Monaca di Monza," Storia del Secolo XVII. di Giovanni Rosini. Pisa: Capurro. 1829. 2 vols.

repair to Venice. On their crossing the Po, the young libertine is killed in an accidental affray; and the misguided nun is left alone to pine away in remorse and bereavement.

That story of love and guilt, so appalling under the dark veil of mystery in which Manzoni originally shrouded it, gains, nothing, we believe, by being spun out so unskilfully to the length of two volumes; and however Rosini's ease and amenity of style, and his thorough acquaintance with the times and localities of his subject, may render these volumes curious and even agreeable as a descriptive work, it can hardly fail to prove tame and tedious as a romantic narrative.

More cares were bestowed upon, and more praise was awarded to, Rosini's second novel, in four volumes, "Luisa Strozzi," published at Pisa, in 1832*. The subject is among the noblest that history ever suggested. Luisa, daughter of Filippo Strozzi, the wealthiest citizen, and one of the noblest characters in Italy, in the sixteenth century, sister of Piero, afterwards marshal, and of Lione, admiral of France—a woman of the rarest beauty and of the loftiest character—had the misfortune of attracting the attentions of the dissolute Alessandro de Medici, the absolute Lord, and afterwards the first Duke of Florence. Irritated by her proud repulses, maddened by her fortunate escape, the base tyrant pursues his victim even to the Court of France, whither, with all her family, she had been compelled to take refuge, and where she dies of poison, administered by the secret agents of the Medici's vengeance.

Here was the subject for a tragedy of the deepest dye; and the occasional introduction of such historical characters as Michael Angelo and Guicciardini, Berni and Alamanni,

* "Luisa Strozzi," Romanzo Storico di Giovanni Rosini. Pisa: Capurro. 1832. 4 vols. 8vo.

Francis of France, and Catharine de' Medici—to say nothing of the heroine's own family, and of its fierce partisans, the Valori, Capponi, Ginori, and a hundred others—offered as wide a field as the most powerful imagination could wish for.

Unfortunately Rosini (as well as Guerrazzi and D'Azeglio, who, as we shall see, have written historical novels on the closing scenes of Florentine Liberty) laboured under a great disadvantage, of which he seems hardly aware. His theme is too well known; the subject is hackneyed. Nerli and Nardi, Segni, Varchi, Adriani, and other contemporary historians, left nothing untold. Most of them actors or sufferers—none of them calm and impartial spectators of the calamitous scenes which signalised the downfal of Florence—they registered every particular with almost a provoking minuteness. They may have exaggerated, palliated, openly violated the truth; much might yet remain for the work of posthumous criticism, but little or nothing, we should fancy, for the arbitrary fabric of fiction. Fiction delights in the twilight of doubt and uncertainty: it loves to contemplate objects fading in the distance of time and space: it hovers fondly over the castellated ruins of a feudal age, in which men fought and wrought not: it shrinks back dazzled and scared before the glare of modern history. Florence in the sixteenth century rises before us, living in the revelations of her hundred writers; every feature of her heroes was sent down to posterity in canvas and marble; every word they uttered was registered in the archives of the Republic. The houses they built are still standing, sound, solid, inhabited; their armour, their furniture, their handwriting, are all before us. Who shall dare to mythologise on so well-defined a subject—a subject about which we know all that *can* and all that *cannot* be known? Rosini can only either give us a frigid account of the facts, such as they are registered in the works of Varchi, Segni and Co., minus the *naïveté*, the warmth and eager-

ness of those charming eye-witnesses, or else patch up with them a few paltry episodes of imaginary characters, much to the disparagement of the leading subject.

We say this less in dispraise of Rosini's work (which is remarkably well written and sufficiently amusing, notwithstanding a certain unwieldiness) than as a further development of our ideas respecting a style of composition which has perhaps too long misled the taste of European readers. Of the many Italian historical novels which are now passing through our hands, only in one instance, we think, the subject was judiciously selected.

Professor Rosini was not, perhaps, much happier in the choice of his third novel, than we have seen him in his two foregoing performances. "Count Ugolino" would be too much, we should think, for the genius of Walter Scott himself. Nothing can be more rash, nothing more dangerous, nothing more sure to lead to a signal defeat, than to attempt to touch what Genius has indelibly marked out as its own. The hundred lines of Dante, unrivalled in ancient or modern poetry, have haunted loftier heads than the one Professor Rosini carries on his shoulders. We have seen all the fine arts at work to body forth the shadowy conception which Dante was pleased to involve in such an awful sublimity of mystery. Pictures, basso-relievos, groups of statues, tableaux of waxen automatons—what has not been resorted to, and to what purpose, and with what effect? That poor *Guastamestieri* of Donizetti, the most unscrupulous of Italian composers, even bethought himself of setting those divine verses to music! Eternal powers! Dante has done, and left nothing for others to do. Not a word was omitted, not a sound, not a note, not dash of the pen. Let no man dare to interfere with it. Touch it not, Giovanni Rosini! It is sacrilege, and the forfeit of thy literary reputation can scarcely atone for thy profanation!

We have seen only part of this novel, though the third

and last volume was published ever since August 1843. The MS. has been lying on the author's desk, unable as he was to give it his final cares, as long as his time was utterly engrossed by the above-mentioned "Storia della Pittura Italiana." The romance has been intrusted to, and edited by, Giovanni Battista Perotti. Besides, the Guelph and Ghibeline heroes, whose dissensions wrought such cruel calamities on the Republic of Pisa towards the close of the thirteenth century, the author, faithful to his system, and strong in his vast erudition, introduces all the remarkable characters of the age, such as Guido di Montefeltro, Buonconte, Nino di Gallura, and others with whom Dante made us familiar, as well as Nicolò Pisano, Cimabue and his boyish apprentice, Giotto, Guido Cavalcanti, Brunetto Latini, Castruccio Castracani, also a child, and finally Dante Alighieri himself, who was twenty years of age at the epoch of the horrid tragedy which he was to send down to endless posterity. The novel is illustrated by an historical dissertation on the rise and increment of the Republic of Pisa, from its earliest memorials in 1064, down to Ugolino's death in 1285.

Rosini's style is always correct and fluent, sometimes lofty and imaginative; we subjoin, as a very short specimen, the description of an Italian sunrise, at the opening of his latest novel:

"If it ever could happen," he begins, "that to a man born blind either a miracle or the skill of art could impart the blessed gift of vision, among so many wonders of the universe, none, I think, would be for him more enrapturing than the rising of the sun.

"Darkness gradually clearing before the faintest streaks of dawn—the stars fading one by one, and departing as it were no one knows whither—the surrounding objects rising into being, starting up as it were no one knows wherefrom —every thing bathed in vivid colours by the mysterious agency of light, and the vapours in the East blushing

deeper and deeper, till the round orb of the great luminary appears radiant and majestic from the bosom of the deep —this is indeed the wonder of wonders, the life of nature, the glory of God's creation.

"Then kneels the Gueber on the threshold of his hut on the Ganges, and worships it; the wild Peruvian from the stillness of his wild woodland praises it; the sun-burnt Egyptian hails it from the foot of the wide-echoing cataracts of the Nile.

"Habit may have blunted in us the sense of wonder, but not lessened our delight; for civilised man is not dead to the beauties of God's handiwork, even though often too proud to bow before its wondrous Maker.

"Leader and comforter of man in the greatest deeds and trials of life, the sun beholds all hearts sinking at his disappearing, and warmth and respiration restored by his presence, even as the universe wakes at the touch of his life-imparting beams.

"It was on the 4th of August, 1284, that year so memorable for the Pisan republic, when, *towards the fall of eve*, a large number of old men, women, and youths, were seen gathering from every part of the country, and from the surrounding townships, to be present, and, as near as they could contrive, to witness on the banks of the Arno the solemn benediction which the Archbishop was to bestow on the Pisan fleet, previous to its sailing against the Genoese."

Such is Rosini;—an emphatic, but rather commonplace description of morning, such as might equally well suit the first chapter of any other novel in the world, to usher in an action, which, after all, happens to begin at nightfall.

But anterior to Rosini, and, by date of publication, if not actually by priority of conception, anterior to Manzoni himself, was Dr. Carlo Varese of Genoa, long known by the public as the author of "Sibilla Odaleta;" under which

nom de guerre he afterwards published seven other novels, all more or less of an historical cast, and written in imitation of Walter Scott, whose enthusiastic admirer the author professed himself to be in early youth*. It was even said of him that he wrote with the *falsa riga*, the ruling paper of Walter Scott, an expression in Italy denoting the lowest degree of servile imitation. We would not pronounce so harshly against him, though something of the manner, of the knack, of the great master is certainly discernible, especially in the general arrangement and at the opening of Varese's novels. But he is nevertheless a writer of considerable inventive and descriptive power, paints characters with skill, and is seldom dull and wearisome.

Whatever might be his feelings on the outset of his career, he seems to have outlived his partiality both for the father of historical romance and for that branch itself of literature. In his preface to the "Preziosa di Sanluri," he draws a long parallel between Rossini, the musical composer, and Walter Scott, hinting, that as those two rare men are equally remarkable for their wonderful fertility and facility of composition, so they may, also, both be charged with having corrupted public taste in that style of performance in which each of them respectively excelled.

* "Sibilla Odaleta, Romanzo Storico di un Italiano." Milan. 1827. 2 vols. 8vo.

"La Fidanzata Ligure ovvero Costumi ed Usanze della Riviera, dell' autore della Sibilla Odaleta." Mil. 1828. 2 vols.

"I Prigionieri di Pizzighettone, dell' autore della Sibilla Odaleta." Mil. 1829. 3 vols. 8vo.

"Folchetto Malispini, Romanzo Storico, dell' autore," &c. Mil. 1830. 2 vols.

"Il Proscritto, Storia Sarda, dell' autore," &c. Turin. 1830. 3 vols.

"Gerolimi, ossia il Nano di una Principessa, dell' autore," &c. Milan. 1829. 1 vol.

"Preziosa di Sanluri, ossia i Montanari Sardi, Romanzo Storico," &c. Mil. 1832. 2 vols.

"Torriani e Visconti, Romanzo Storico," &c. Milan. 1839. 2 vols.

And in another letter prefixed to his last publication, "Torriani e Visconti," he hesitates not to assert, that historical novels have been to some readers what certain light and tonic kinds of food are to persons in a period of convalescence—destined only to re-invigorate a stomach worn out by long disease, and to dispose it for the reception of a more solid and healthy nourishment; that in the like manner, in order to pass gradually from the sickening frivolities of the Arcadians to the severe studies of history, a transitional literature was required; but that, being now persuaded that the Italian youths no longer needed to be allured by similar enticements, he was resolved that this should be his last novel, and proceeded to write a history of the Republic of Genoa.

Glad to hear a man, one-half of whose life has been spent in the production of works of fiction, entertain our own views of the subject at present under our consideration, we shall not hesitate to repeat that we have derived great pleasure from the perusal of some of Varese's narratives.

"Sibilla Odaleta" dates from the invasion of Italy, by Charles VIII. of France, in 1494, and terminates with his expulsion in the following year. The historical characters are delineated with a master's hand; the most striking scenes, especially Piero Capponi's daring demeanour in presence of the haughty invader at Florence, are drawn with spirit; and the dark tragedy of deep revenge in which Sibilla and her Albanese father are concerned, is well conducted. This novel has, in short, all the vividness, warmth, and spontaneousness of a first essay; and it has also, as may be expected, all its exuberance, waywardness, and irregularity.

"I Prigionieri di Pizzighettone" may be regarded, in some manner, as a continuation of "Sibilla Odaleta." It opens on the Lombard plain on the eve of the battle of Pavia, in which Francis I. of France was utterly routed

and taken prisoner by the lieutenants of the Emperor Charles V., in 1525. The French monarch is conveyed to the stronghold of Pizzighettone, on the Adda, where a few of his Italian partisans conceive several bold plans for his escape, till the jealous Austrian, at the most critical moment, issues orders to have his royal prisoner transferred under his own custody to Madrid. There is much in the plotting of the King's favourers that reminds us of Mary Stuart and the Castle of Lochleven.

"Folchetto Malispini" and "La Fidanzata Ligure" ought to have been favourite subjects with Dr. Varese—the scene of both of them being laid among the wild hills and luxuriant shores of his native *Riviera* of Genoa. The former is an historical romance of the twelfth century, describing the Apennine of Lunigiana and Genoa, such as that region could be under the feudal sway of the half-heroes, half-marauders, of the kindred families of Malispini and Pela-vicini, two younger branches of the House of Este. The "Fidanzata" refers to modern manners; the story beginning towards the close of the last century. It describes an old-fashioned mountain inn, and its hostess, a despotic and irascible character, a foe to all innovation, soured by the dreaded rise of rival establishments, in whom it is impossible not to recognise a new version of our old acquaintance Meg Dods, in "St. Ronan's Well."

"Il Proscritto" and "Preziosa di Sanluri" are both Sardinian stories; nor can any country, the wild highlands of Scotland not even excepted, present a more unexplored, more primitive, more interesting region, and a more original race of people, than that half-inhabited, less-than-half-civilised island, the possession of which decorated Victor Amadeus of Savoy and his successors with the much-coveted title of Kings. "Preziosa" describes the island as it was under the dominion of the Arragonese in 1470. "Il Proscritto" is the autobiographical account of a young Genoese led by circumstances to view the island, long after the cession of its crown to the present dynasty. It is

quite in the style of Frank Osbaldistone's sketch of Loch Lomond and its fierce mountaineers, during his visit to Rob Roy. The manners, feelings, superstitions, and traits of character of the natives of Sardinia have been pictured with the confidence of a man whom long residence on the spot has rendered a complete master of his subject.

"Gerolimi," or "the Dwarf of a Princess," is also a romance of modern manners; in this novel the author has adopted an epistolary style, which also was probably suggested by the correspondence of Darsie Latimer and his college friend in "Redgauntlet."

Finally, the last of Varese's novels, "Torriani e Visconti," is an account of the popular revolutions at Milan, by which, after a struggle of nearly half a century, the aristocratic power of the Ghibelines, under the influence of the Visconti, was enabled to exterminate the Guelph or popular party, headed by the house of Guido della Torre. This novel is not, perhaps, the happiest of its author's productions. We see for the third time the characters of astrologers, court-fools, and other similar personages, which after their appearance in "Sibilla Odaleta," and "I Prigionieri di Pizzighettone," might more judiciously have been spared. The style is also less natural and flowing, and the nature of the subject brings the Genoese writer into competition with several Milanese novelists, who have over him the advantage of a more distinct knowledge of localities, and a more intimate acquaintance with their national chronicles.

One of the most powerful writers who attempted to illustrate the history of Milan in works of fiction, is Giovanni Battista Bazzoni, who published his "Castello di Trezzo" long before 1828*. The subject of this novel is the

* "Il Castello di Trezzo, Novella Storica di G. B. B." 3rd edit. Milan: Stella. 1828. 1 vol.

"Falco della Rupe, o La Guerra di Musso, Racconto Storico di Giovan Battista Bazzoni." Milan. 1829. 1 vol. 8vo.

"Racconti Storici di G. B. Bazzoni." Milan. 1830. 2 vols. 8vo.

murder of Bernabò Visconti in the vicinity of the Castle of Trezzo, by the hand of his treacherous nephew, Gian Galeazzo, in 1385. Bazzoni's second tale is "Falco della Rupe," "or The War of Musso." The real hero—notwithstanding the interest attached to the brave *Mountain Hawk*, an old sturdy highlander—is Gian Carlo de' Medici, afterwards the Marquis of Marignano, one of the most famous generals of Francis of France. The scene is laid on the shores of the Lake of Como, early in the sixteenth century, when the pure waves of that azure lake were darkened by the hundred sails of Gian Carlo, then at war with the Imperialists, and the luxuriant hills around shook with the report of his floating artillery. In both these stories, as well as in two volumes of shorter historical tales since published, Bazzoni strikes us by a few pictures drawn with a bold, masterly hand, by a description of storms and battles, which might almost remind us of Salvator Rosa's style of painting. We think we can safely award him the title of the manliest of Italian novelists.

We wish we could speak with equal praise of the works of Giovanni Campiglio, a rather fastidious and confident literary man, since, being disposed to find fault with the prolixity of the Waverley Novels, he reproduced them in his own compendiary imitations or *rifacimentos* which he styled "Beauties" or "Amenities of Walter Scott." His own original romances, meanwhile, generally relating to early dates of Milanese history, are not as recommendable for taste or style, as we might have reason to expect from an improver of Scott *.

* "La Figlia di un Ghibellino, Romanzo Storico, risguardante Milano al Cominciare del Secolo Decimo Quinto." Milan. 1830. (Being an account of the conspiracy to which Gian Maria Visconti fell a victim.)

"Uberto Visconti, Romanzo Storico, risguardante Milano ai Tempi di Bernabò e Gian-Galeazzo Visconti." Milan. 1831.

"Ludovico il Moro, o Condizioni, Usi, Costumi, Singolarità e memorabili Avvenimenti di Milano sulla Fine del Secolo XV. Romanzo Storico

We shall not so speedily dismiss "Marco Visconti," by Tommaso Grossi, one of the noblest poets of modern Italy. We have not forgotten the day when Grossi showed talent and ambition enough to aspire to enrich his country with a new style of poetry entirely national. "La Fuggitiva," and "Ildegonda," and other short romances in the stanza of Ariosto and Tasso, but with a refinement and melody, with a warmth and pathos, for which Italy was indebted to the modern school of Romanticism, were a better kind of composition and more consonant with the taste and temperament of the Italian people, than the long and often tedious narrations in prose by which they have been superseded.

Grossi, the Bellini of Poetry, as he has been commonly called, the poet of broken-hearted maidens, as Raphael is the painter of Madonnas, and Correggio of children, had already written, besides the above-mentioned "Novelle Romantiche," a long historical romance in verse, entitled "I Lombardi alla Prima Crociata."

Grossi is one of the rare beings entitled to the appellation of the "poet of the heart." We know of few poets in whose lines gentle thoughts issue more pure and spontaneous. The affections, occupying the most eminent place in his poems, are entirely free from that affectation, from that artificial refinement, the capital fault of Italian poets from the days of Petrarch, which, known under the name of *concetti* among poets, and *maniera* among painters, has caused strangers to say, that the Italians have their feelings in their head instead of their heart. Grossi has nothing epic in his poetry, and we have reason to rejoice at it. Italy had already heroic poems in sufficient number. In our days, when mind decides the chances of combat,

di Giovanni Campiglio, autore della storia Universale d'Italia." Milan. 1837.

"Elena della Torre ossia Milano Seicento Anni fa." (Being the Rise of the House della Torre after the Battle of Cortenova in the Time of the Emperor Frederic II. 1260.) Milan. 1839.

and even military courage has assumed altogether a moral stamp, the everlasting battles of Homer and Tasso have become wearisome. Grossi understood this. In his tales, even in his poem on the Crusades, the chief struggle is carried on by the heart; heroism is, in his verse, only chivalrous enthusiasm. Religion is resignation and hope; love is devotion, purity and sorrow.

"La Fuggitiva"—a runaway girl following her lover beyond the Danube and Moscowa, mourning over his bleeding corpse on the plains of the last of Napoleon's victorious battle-fields, involved alone and helpless in the disasters of that woful Russian retreat, surviving all hardships and dangers only to expire in her mother's arms repentant and forgiven—Ildegonda, a new Juliet, atoning for a pure guiltless love with long torture and anguish in a nunnery, insulted, harassed by cowled fiends, haunted by terrific visions, and by a vigorous reaction of stubborn vitality draining to the last drop the cup of woe which had been filled for her by Providence—Giselda, the fair pilgrim of the Po, riding on her white palfrey by the side of her brother, tender, inexperienced; a prisoner in Antioch, in love with a handsome Mussulman, repenting, relapsing; innocent, beautiful in her apostasy as in her conversion;—all these sweet creations, these exquisite romances, full of the life, manners and feelings of bygone ages, had been read and cherished in Italy, long before Scott's works had become the theme of universal admiration.

But Grossi himself was soon won over to the fashionable mania: and, forsaking his mournful harp, he also entered the lists with the Ultramontane novelist, under the banner of his "master and brother" Manzoni*. "Marco Vis-

* Marco Visconti, Storia del Trecento di Tommaso Grossi." Milan. 1835. Grossi first distinguished himself by a short, half-satirical, half-political poem, in the Milanese dialect, "L'Ombra di Prina." "*La*

conti" is a work in high repute among the author's countrymen. The scene opens on the lovely hills surrounding the Lake of Como, towards the year 1329. The hero is a warrior issued from the princely house of Visconti, which established its sway over Milan. His personal valour, his liberal and affable manners, render him an object of jealousy to his kinsmen, Luchino, Giovanni, and Matteo, the reigning members of the family, who resolve upon his destruction, and accomplish it by one of those deeds of treachery so common in the annals of that iniquitous race. By the introduction of minstrels and tournaments, Grossi gave his narrative a chivalrous colour which does not seem consistent with the spirit and manners of a country in which democratic notions and mercantile enterprise had early extinguished all feelings of a similar description. Grossi has not risen in our estimation, as an inventor, by his romance in prose. In a country where "Ivanhoe" is the most popular of Scott's novels, "Marco Visconti," which is written somewhat in imitation of it, must appear comparatively tame. Nevertheless it has been ranked among the standard Italian novels, and, together with "I Promessi Sposi," has been republished in a splendid illustrated edition, rivalling the French "Don Quixote" and the English "Arabian Nights."*

Fuggitiva," an episode of the Russian Campaign, 1812, was also originally written in the native dialect of the author, and more lately translated into Italian verse. "L'Ildegonda" is a legend of the thirteenth century. "I Lombardi alla prima Crociata," an heroico-chivalrous work, in fifteen cantos, which he did not choose to call an epic poem. It is the "*Jerusalem Delivered*" in a romantic garb. Grossi's earliest publication in Italian was "Melodie Lombarde;" the latest, "Ulrico e Lida," in the style of "Ildegonda."

* Illustrated editions of Italian novels:—

Manzoni, "I Promessi Sposi." Milan: Guglielmi and Redaelli; illustrated by Gonin, Sacchi, &c. 1840. Now complete in 1 vol. 4to.

Grossi, "Marco Visconti." 2nd edit., illustrated by Focosi, Bonatti, &c. Milan. 1842.

Notwithstanding this general suffrage, we should be at a loss where to find in this novel a passage likely to interest our readers, were it not for a few lyrical effusions worthy of the poet of "Ildegonda," one of which we subjoin as a specimen of the most melodious modern poetry Italy has produced; though its charms reside so intrinsically in the language and measure, that it is only with the greatest diffidence we venture upon a translation.

"LA RONDINELLA. THE PRISONER TO THE SWALLOW.

"Rondinella pellegrina
Che ti posi in sul verone,
Ricantando ogni mattina
Quella flebile canzone,
Che vuoi dirmi in tua favella,
Pellegrina Rondinella?

"Solitaria nell' obblio
Dal tuo sposo abbandonata,
Piangi forse al pianto mio,
Vedovetta sconsolata?
Piangi, piangi in tua favella,
Pellegrina Rondinella.

"Pur di me manco infelice
Tu alle penne almen t' affidi,
Scorri il lago e la pendice,
Empi l'aria de' tuoi stridi,
Tutto il giorno in tua favella,
Lui chiamando o Rondinella.

"Oh se anch' io! . . . ma lo contende
Questa bassa angusta volta,
Dove sole non risplende,
Dove l'aura ancor m' è tolta,
Donde a te la mia favella,
Giunge appena, o Rondinella.

HIRONDELLE, thou winged rover,
Wafted here from skies remote,
On this ledge so fain to hover,
Uttering aye that plaintive note.
Say; what would thy wailings tell,
Tender wanderer, HIRONDELLE?

Lonely, by thy mate forsaken,
Early pierced by sorrow's dart,
Could a captive's fortunes waken
Kindred feelings in thy heart?
Oh! thy wailings soothe me well,
Tender wanderer, HIRONDELLE.

Still to a doom far milder fated,
On thy wings thou rangest free;
Still to a fond remembrance mated,
Call'st on him who is lost to thee.
O'er the lake, o'er hill and dell,
Widely wandering, HIRONDELLE.

Whilst, beneath these vaultings drear,
Here, alone immured I pine;
Where the air no breezes cheer,
Where no sunbeams ever shine;
Whilst my voice from this dark cell,
Scarce can reach thee, HIRONDELLE.

D'Azeglio, "Ettore Fieramosca." With 200 illustrations by Deloraine. Turin. 1842.

Cantù, "Margherita Pusterla." Same edition. Turin. 1843.

Rosini, "La Monaca di Monza." Illustrated edition. Milan. 1843.

"Il Settembre innanzi viene
E a lasciarmi ti prepari,
Tu vedrai lontane arene;
Nuovi monti e nuovi mari
Salutando in tua favella,
Pellegrina Rondinella.

"Ed io tutte le mattine
Riaprendo gli occhi al pianto,
Tra le nevi e tra le brine,
Crederò d' udir quel canto
Onde par che in tua favella
Mi compianga, o Rondinella.

"Una croce a primavera
Troverai su questo suolo;
Rondinella in sulla sera
Sovra lei raccogli il volo,
Dimmi pace in tua favella,
Pellegrina Rondinella."

Lo! September's warning finger
Bids thee off to skies remote;
Other climes, thou summer singer,
There await thy genial note.
Speed then, leave me, fare thee well,
Happy wanderer, HIRONDELLE.

Still to thee my thoughts returning,
As I wail my fate, full oft,
By the break of winter's morning
I shall dream to hear aloft
Thy wild music's mournful swell,
Soothing, cheering, HIRONDELLE.

Down, beneath yon cypress bower,
There shall rise a cross at spring;
On that cross, at evening hour,
Weary pilgrim, fold thy wing,
Bid me there in peace to dwell,
Friendly wanderer, HIRONDELLE.

Next in order of merit among the Milanese novelists, we would rank Cesare Cantù, also in early youth a poet of some reputation in his country. This versatile writer, still in the flower of youth, has already distinguished himself in many different branches of literature, and associated with the most active, sanguine, and liberal of Italian booksellers, Pomba of Turin, is editing encyclopædical works of a very solid character. In a very diminutive frame he cherishes projects of a very gigantic extent, and had already made his name known among novelists, when he raised himself several degrees higher by the publication of his "Margherita Pusterla."*

This novel may be looked upon as a continuation of

* "La Madonna d' Imbevera, Racconto di Cesare Cantù." Milan: Truffi. 1835. 1 vol. (It describes Milanese life under the Spanish dominion, towards the close of the sixteenth century, and contains glowing descriptions of the Brianza, &c.)

"Margherita Pusterla, Racconto di Cesare Cantù." 3 vols. Milan. 1838.

"Marco Visconti;" consisting of the narration of a conspiracy formed against Luchino Visconti by his relative, Franciscolo Pusterla, one of the noblest and wealthiest Milanese, intent upon avenging an insult offered to the person of his wife by the tyrant. The execution of Pusterla and his accomplices, and the banishment of the tyrant's nephews, Bernabò and Galeazzo, implicated in this treasonable attempt, terminate a tragical catastrophe, to which the death of the beautiful and uncontaminated heroine on the scaffold adds the most intense and painful interest.

"Margherita Pusterla" is the work of a clever and industrious writer; a man of talent, without a spark of genius. It is essentially conceived in imitation of Manzoni, both in form and spirit, in as far, at least, as monks and high priests appear as heroes of unalloyed virtue and unshrinking intrepidity. The story is a long tissue of heart-rending scenes, unrelieved even by the poor jests of the Court-Fool, Grillincervello. The author seems well aware of its effect on his reader's heart—if, at least, we may judge from this pithy and significant Preface.

"—— Lettor mio, hai tu spasimato?

—— No.

—— Questo libro non è per te."

Right, Signor Cesare Cantù, rely on the drivelling disposition of your reader; but never forget that the pathetic, as well as the sublime, is always closely bordering on the ludicrous.

But of minor writers, chiefly Milanese, endeavouring to search into the annals of Lombard history, for the subject of their fictions, the number begins to be pretty considerable*.

* "Cecilia di Baone, ossia la Marca Trivigiana al Finire del Medio Evo. Narrazione Storica di P. Q." Venice. 1830. 4 vols.

"Isnardo, o il Milite Romano, Racconto Italico di Giovanni Colleoni." Milan. 1839. 5 vols.

The first wars of the Lombard league, in the Trevisan Marches, the crusades, the holy wars against the house of Ezzelino da Romano, have afforded themes for several novels; among which "Cecilia di Baone," "Isnardo," and "Gli Ezzelini," have been received with applause.

It may be stated, among other praises due to the novelists of Italy, that not a line has been found in any of the works of which the names have been mentioned in the present chapter, to which the strictest morality could reasonably object. Occasionally we thought we might detect in these authors a lurking partiality of local patriotism, drawing their description of scenery and characters to an unbearable length. Occasionally, also, their love of chivalrous shows, of battles and tournaments, their minute details of costumes, armour, and buildings, may prove heavy and wearisome. In all their works, but especially in those of the earliest writers, we find rather the ex-

"Grassa e Ceresio, Fatto Storico Veronese del Secolo XII., scritto da Girolamo Orti." Florence. 1232.

"Cabrino Fondulo, Frammento di Storia Lombarda sul Finire del Secolo XIV., e il Principiare del XV., Opera di Virginio Lancetti, Cremonese." Mil. 1827. 2 vols.

"Igilda di Brivio, Storia del Secolo Decimo Quinto; narrata da Bassano Finoli." 4 vols. Milan. 1837.

"L'Orfanella della Brianza, Storia del Secolo Decimo Settimo, narrata da Bassano Finoli." 4 vols. Milan. 1840.

"Caterina Medici di Brono, Novella Storica del Secolo XVII., di Achille Mauri." 2 vols. Leghorn. 1831.

"Lutalto di Vitolungo, Racconto di Luigi Vigna da Chivasso." 2 vols. Novara. 1835.

"Paolo de' Conti di Camisano, Storia tratta da Antiche Memorie Cremasche." 4 vols. Milan. 1839.

"Brazzo da Milano, Manoscritto del Secolo XVI., publicato da Federico Borella." 2 vols. 8vo. Milan. 1841.

"Teodote, Storia del Secolo Ottavo, di Defendente Sacchi." Milan. 1832.

"Novelle e Racconti di Defendente Sacchi." Milan. 1836. 2 vols. 8vo.

aggeration of the faults than of the beauties of their school.

We have hardly leisure to mention other works referring to later epochs of Lombard history, such as "Igilda di Brivio," and "L'Orfanella della Brianza," "Caterina Medici di Brono," &c., &c., even though the last-mentioned was written, it is attested, under inspection and with assistance of Manzoni, and certainly in strict imitation of his works.

We shall not, however, omit to give our tribute of praise to a fair Romance writer (for Italy has otherwise no Gores or Maberlys), the Signora Teresa Perversi, author of an interesting novel on a most interesting subject—the religious wars and revolutions of Valtellina, 1620. Few of her countrymen ever made choice of a nobler or more original theme; and the liberal and enlightened spirit with which she viewed the great religious question of Catholicism and Protestantism, was hardly to be expected from a lady in a country where those of her sex are fettered by fashion, even when not by government, to the assumption and affectation of religious bigotry *.

We find also the name of our old acquaintance, Defendente Sacchi, among historical novelists; though most of his recent productions in that line are not of as large dimensions as "Oriele," his master-piece in the *piagnoloso* style. Sacchi seems to have grown stout and merry as he advanced in age, and in his two last volumes of "Racconti e Novelle," we find, among graver narratives, historical accounts of the origin of some popular proverbs, such as "E' fatto il becco all' oca," "Non è più tempo che Berta filava," as well as "Origine della Polenta," "Arlecchino e Compagnia," "Est, Est, Est," and similar stories, evidently of a humorous description.

Our curiosity has also been attracted by four or five

* "Evelina, Racconto di Teresa Perversi." 1 vol. Milan: Stella. 1840.

anonymous publications, issued from the Milanese Press, without a date, beautifully printed and illustrated, all probably from the pen of one and the same author. The object of this unknown writer is to illustrate by his tales some old scraps of Lombard songs, apparently without meaning, commonly used since time immemorial by the Lombard children in their plays. These songs are placed as if by way of epigraph on the title-pages. The tales are cleverly and amusingly written, and, as they display more originality of style than any other of the works we have hitherto reviewed, they seem likely to constitute a new branch of popular literature*.

* We transcribe the title-pages of these singular productions :—

"Laminee,
Cicca,
Berlicca,
La forca t' impicca,
Leon,
Speron (col rest,)
Indovina se l' è quest.

Cronaca Stravagantissima Milanese Stata scritta da un Cameriere di Giovan Galeazzo Sforza." Milan: Bravetta.

(It relates to the times of Luchino and Azzo Visconti, and ends with the battle of Parabiago, in which Lodrisio Visconti was defeated by his fortunate kinsmen, in 1338.)

"Antoniolo de' Landriani, Capitano di Ventura, Scene Storiche del Secolo XIV.

Togn ! Togn !
Pela rogn !
Pela fig !
Capitani di formig,
Capitani di Soldaa,
Induvina chi l' è staa."

Milan: Colombo. (1842.)

"Le Ca' dei Cani, Cronaca Milanese del Secolo XIV., cavato da un manoscritto di un Canattiere di Bernabò Visconti." Milan, no date. (Relating to the atrocities committed in the kennel of Visconti, who was said to feed his hounds with human victims.)

"Guarda, guarda la Vecchia; Bizzarro intrecciamento di casi ridicoli

The history of Venice is not without illustrators, though not so numerous as those who have written on the history of Lombardy. A. F. Falconetti undertook to make every age of Venetian history the subject of as many successive novels, and to our knowledge he followed up his idea to a considerable length. The first of his productions, "Irene Delfino," is a romantic chronicle of Venice before the election of the first Doge in the sixth century. "La Villa di San Giuliano," and "La Naufraga di Malamocco," continue the vicissitudes of the rising Republic during the seventh and eighth centuries*.

Falconetti is, like Varese, a professed imitator of Scott. He even avows that his first thought of mythologising on Venetian subjects was suggested to him by the perusal of the "Chronicle of the Canongate." We are not informed whether the author carried his plans to any further extent, as since the publication of his last works, in 1830, no other novel bearing his name has yet reached England. Those three first essays had, however, sufficient merit to cause us to regret the interruption of the promised series; nor were they unworthy of a subject as fertile in heart-stirring incidents as Venice in the days of Candiano, Delfino, and Orseolo. They are, it is true, rather too minute and explicit—too plausible in their descriptions of the manners of a race so far removed from us, and whose deeds are only registered in a few bare and barren chronicles. The

e compassionevoli, colla Storia di una stranissima Congiura del Popolo Milanese avvenuta nel 1754." Milan, no date.

"La Scommessa col Diavolo, Leggenda Fantastica." Milan, no date.

* "Irene Delfino, Storia Veneziana del Sesto Secolo." Venice. 1829. 2 vols.

"La Villa di San Giuliano, Storia Veneziana del Secolo Settimo." Venice. 1830. 2 vols.

"La Naufraga di Malamocco, Storia Veneta del Secolo VIII., di A. F. Falconetti, autore di 'Irene Delfino' e della 'Villa di San Giuliano.'" Venice. 1830. 2 vols.

author's fancy runs rather too free and intemperate; we miss in his works that severe cast of antiquity, inseparable, in our minds, from the sayings and doings of a people whose very language is a matter of doubt and perplexity to us. But the fault lies, perhaps, more with the subject itself, than with the poet who undertakes to handle it; and we have reason to doubt, for example, whether the author of "The Last Days of Pompeii," placed in analogous difficulties, was much more successful in overcoming them. Clytemnestras in a Pompadour *toupet*, and Agamemnons in a bobwig *à la Louis XV.*, are not phenomena unexampled even in recent times.

"La Regina di Cipro" is the only Venetian narrative in our hands, besides Falconetti's works. The subject is sufficiently implied by the title. It contains the vicissitudes of that fair Adrian Bride, whom the Republic adopted as its own daughter previous to her marriage with the sovereign of Cyprus and last titular King of Jerusalem, in order to inherit that fairest of the Mediterranean islands, after her abdication in 1470*.

Bologna, that town so rife with tumult and strife in old republican days, nor, indeed, very tranquil at any time, could not escape the attention of our romantic writers. Our friend, Defendente Sacchi, who, even in his new historical capacity, cannot divest himself of his old *penchant* for sigh-clouded willow groves, and cypress-shadowed cemeteries, has laid hold of the most doleful story of mediæval Italy, and related at full length the tragedy of love-sick Imelda throwing herself on the bleeding body of her wounded lover, and sucking death from his poisoned wounds. The civil wars of Scacchesi and Rampanti, in the fifteenth century, have been told by Carlo Rusconi in his "Giovanni Bentivoglio." The same writer has quite

* "La Regina di Cipro, Romanzo Storico dell Avvocato Girolamo Fiorio." 1 vol. Mantua. 1838.

lately printed a new novel under the title of "Charles V. at Bologna."*

The King of Naples and the Pope, till lately, have so actively exerted themselves to prevent the free circulation of books between the North and South of Italy, that of a very large number of works published in the Two Sicilies, especially on national subjects, very few succeeded in crossing the Papal frontier, and fewer still are enabled to make their way beyond the Alps. Defective as our catalogue of Neapolitan novels must consequently be, we shall not fail to notice such as have, almost providentially, reached our hands; and these are—"Joanna of Naples," by Giacinto Battaglia, a Milanese writer; and "The First Viceroy of Naples," by E. Cappoccio di Belmonte, a Neapolitan exile in Paris†. This last, a work of considerable merit and highly valued, is intended as a description of the Southern Kingdom of Italy during the first occupation of the Spaniards at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

One of its most important episodes is that combat between thirteen French and as many Italian men-at-arms at Barletta, on the thirteenth of February, 1503, which Massimo d'Azeglio adopted as a subject of his first novel, "Ettore Fieramosca."

We have thus been led to him, among the novel-writers

* "I Lambertazzi e I Geremei, o Le Fazioni di Bologna nel Secolo XIII., Cronaca di un Trovatore pubblicata da Defendente Sacchi." 2 vols. Florence: Molini. 1831.

"Giovanni Bentivoglio, Storia Bolognese del Sccolo Decimo Quinto compilata da Carlo Rusconi." 2 vols. 12mo. Florence: Usigli. 1835. 2nd Edit. of 6000 copies.

"L' Entrata di Carlo V. in Bologna, Romanzo Storico di Carlo Rusconi." 3 vols. 18mo. Florence. 1841.

† "Giovanna Prima, Regina di Napoli, Storia del Secolo XIV., di Giacinto Battaglia." Milan: Pirotta. 1835.

"Il Primo Vicerè di Napoli, per E. C. di Belmonte." Paris. 1838.

of Italy, who won the widest popularity, and displayed perhaps the highest aptitude for that style of composition. "Ettore Fieramosca" is undoubtedly the happiest subject any historical novelist ever hit upon. An episodical narrative, strictly historical, and yet perfectly separable from history; a long-forgotten page in Guicciardini and Giovio, revived at the very moment that the Italian people felt most painfully alive to every circumstance bearing on their national character; an illustrious deed, and yet performed by second-rate and otherwise obscure individuals, on whose private circumstances fiction was, therefore, at liberty to build as wild an edifice as it liked;—such is this "Disfida di Barletta," second in interest to no work produced by the school to which it belongs."

Not, indeed, that the Italians could ever be at a loss for historical incidents and characters on which to ground their tales, for every page in their chequered annals is in itself a romance; and we know of no novel more entertaining than the sixteen volumes of "The History of the Italian Republics of the Middle Ages," by Sismondi. But not every romantic event in history is equally reducible into the circumscribed limits of a separate narrative. A work by its nature intended for the mass of common readers must be brought down to the level of their limited capacity. The subject can very seldom be so cleverly abstracted from all its associations of cause and effect, from all concomitant interests, that the author may not be compelled either to rely on a larger store of knowledge on the part of his readers than they will eventually be found to possess, or to supply its want by long prefatory dissertations, and occasional illustrations, calculated to arrest at every step the development, and to destroy the interest, of the romantic part of the narrative.

Hence the work will appear to some clever even to obscurity, to others plain even to insipidity. Erudite researches, such as matter-of-fact history has long disci-

plined us to, because essentially meant to instruct, will become utterly unbearable when introduced into a style of writing of which the object is to excite and amuse.

Nothing, in fact, can well be more difficult than the choice of themes fit for so anomalous a production as the historical novel. There is danger in too familiar a subject, for long habit may have hardened us to all impression derivable from its exhibition; danger in too remote a subject, for, besides its abstruseness, sympathy will not soon arise in favour of any object not immediately belonging to us by some ostensible bond of common feeling; the subject must not belong to too ancient a period of history, for a larger share will be left to imagination than is consistent with sober probability; neither must the date be too recent, lest stubborn facts should pin down fancy, and allow no free scope for invention.

These rules, which were laid down a thousand years ago for heroic poetry are, however, grounded on natural laws of universal æsthetics, and therefore equally applicable to historical romance; and, as they gradually discouraged modern poets from attempting epopées, so they will ultimately banish our more recent amalgam of truth and fiction from the republic of letters.

"Ettore Fieramosca," as we have said, most happily shunned this Scylla and Charybdis of the historical novel. Its story may stand by itself. It had been so completely lost sight of as to be quite new at its reappearance; so simple and circumscribed as to be comprehended by the very illiterate; so intensely important as to rivet the attention of the busiest scholar; and its interest is, further, of a recent date. As long as the armies and fleets of Spain were commanded by Farnese, Savoy and Doria, or those of France by Strozzi and Ornano, and the Lombards of Spinola were the best soldiers of Philip II.; even as long as the armies of Beauharnais and Murat behaved so bravely in Spain, Germany, and Russia,—there was no

great chance for a panegyrist of national valour. But after the events of 1820 and 1831, when all Europe raised an outcry against Italian faint-heartedness, and doomed to perpetual servitude a nation which seemed unable to fight for its own liberties—was it not by divine inspiration that the novelist reminded his countrymen that, in another epoch, the misfortunes of Italy had been ascribed to want of military firmness on the part of her children; and that, on that occurrence at least, the bitter taunt was forced down the throat of those who had uttered it, by a fair combat, in the face of the sun—in the presence of the three mightiest nations in Christendom—in a trial, the issue of which was left to the arbitrament of God's own unerring judgment? Those bones of Fieramosca, which had been left to bleach undisturbed on the wild shore on which they had been cast by tempest, are now gathered together and enshrined; they are paraded in procession before a crushed race, to remind them that they are born of men who had sinews and muscles, and warm and stout hearts, as any of the brutal Northerners who trample on them; and that, whenever they seek it, they will find in their own arms and breasts the same nerve and courage, sufficient to bear them through an equal experiment.

The mark of genius is printed on the very title-page of such a work; and though it may be said that it was evidently the production of a young mind—that the fancy was not always sufficiently chastened, and some of the episodes not always judiciously managed—D'Azeglio's first novel has the greatest claims to the gratitude as well as to the admiration of Italy.

The second essay by the same author, "Nicolò de' Lapi," is at the present day the delight of all Italian readers. D'Azeglio did not shrink from a competition with Guerrazzi, whose "Assedio di Firenze" already enjoyed an unequalled popularity.

Several works had already been published on the subject

of Florentine history. Besides Rosini's "Luisa Strozzi," above noticed, a short but powerful narrative was produced by Nicolò Tommaseo, an eminent name among the living authors of Italy*. Still the appearance of Guerrazzi's high-wrought performance eclipsed that, and any other publication in any manner coming within range of his subject. Guerrazzi was already illustrious for his "Battaglia di Benevento," a chivalrous novel in four volumes, illustrating one of the most momentous periods of general Italian history—the downfal of the dynasty of the Swabians under the thunders of the Vatican and the sword of Anjou†. The "Assedio di Firenze" was printed under the name of Anselmo Gualandi; and the Tuscan government, which had winked at its publication, used afterwards every diligence to suppress what proved to be a work of incendiary character. It was, however, immediately republished abroad, and circulated throughout the country with an enthusiasm which no effort of jealous despotism could control. The authorship of the novel was unanimously ascribed to Guerrazzi, who found himself, in consequence, exposed to reprimands, domiciliary visits, and other vexations without number, on the part of the Tuscan police, anxious to discover the MS., even several years after the publication of the obnoxious work—even long after the agitation created by its appearance had almost altogether subsided.

* "Il Duca d'Atene, Narrazione di N. Tommaseo." Paris: Baudry. 1837. 1 vol.

"Memorie di Bianca Capello, Granduchessa di Toscana, raccolte ed illustrate da Stefano Ticozzi." 1 vol. Florence. 1827.

† "La Battaglia di Benevento, Storia del Secolo XIII., scritta da F. D. Guerrazzi." 4 vols. Leghorn. 1840. 2nd Edit.

"L'Assedio di Firenze Capitoli XXX. di Anselmo Gualandi." Italia. 1839. 4 vols.

"Isabella Orsini," by Guerrazzi. Italia. 2 vols.

The "Assedio di Firenze" is the work of an enthusiast. The author himself confessed to his friend, Giuseppe Mazzini, "that he had written a book in sheer impossibility of fighting a battle." The work, in fact, breathes all the combative spirit by which the author was actuated. Few men ever displayed a stronger power of abstraction, few writers ever identified themselves more forcibly with their subjects, than this Gualandi or Guerrazzi, who seemed to live in the age he undertook to describe. He is indeed an old Florentine, one of the devoted champions of the beleaguered city. His own heart beats under the breastplate of the brave and unfortunate Francesco Ferruccio; he strikes with his arm, he bleeds from his wounds. This terrible earnestness, this incarnation of the poet's genius with the theme of his romance, completely won the Italians,—a class of readers always to be swayed by the display of imaginative powers. The "Assedio," with all its defects of unconnected and wayward plan, of turgid and declamatory style, rose at once to a degree of popularity which few novelists could hope, for a considerable period of time, to be able to share.

D'Azeglio, however, feared not to grapple with such a formidable antagonist, and even chose to meet him on his own ground. Florence in her death-struggle might, indeed, afford subject for more than two novels. Truly, although we have already stated our objections to that event for a work of fiction, we feel that a history of that siege is a work still unaccomplished. Contemporary writers have left us more than sufficient materials for such an enterprise; but the arrangement and valuation of such documents, and their description, require such powers of criticism and such mastery of style as are seldom found combined in the same individual. Meanwhile, for the present, to supply the want of a history, we have two historical novels; and both of them, if they can do no better, will have the effect of giving

their readers a vague idea of the leading events of that fatal catastrophe, and create a longing for a more full and correct acquaintance with it.

The "Assedio" and the "Palleschi and Piagnoni" are models of two different branches of the same style of composition. In the former the historical element prevails, in the latter the romantic. In the one, private vicissitudes are only introduced as episodical; in the other, public life is made subservient to individual interest. Guerrazzi's subject is Florence—Nicolò de' Lapi is D'Azeglio's hero. The former wrote more after the manner of Bulwer's latest performances*; the latter more after the fashion of Walter Scott's earliest productions.

Of these two styles, if we approved at all of historical novels, we should decidedly give preference to the last; for historical events, when incidentally introduced, may indeed partially injure the effect of the main fiction; but, when our attention has been from the first engrossed by the importance of historical personages, imaginary heroes will appear mean and contemptible, and their obtrusion untimely and cumbrous. The nobler objects may still appear great and interesting, even when thrown into the background; but, when they stand foremost in the picture, minor things shrink into utter insignificance, and the artist mars the effect of his canvas in proportion as he strives to force them on the attention of the beholder.

In short, we may feel less disposed to quarrel with D'Azeglio, who, having invented his tale, endeavours to dignify it by its association with some great historical epoch; but when we see Guerrazzi, after professing to derive his emotions from well-known sources, resort to fictitious episodes, we believe he has committed an act of

* We say, "after the manner," not in imitation of Bulwer; for the "Siege of Florence" appeared long before the "Last of the Barons;" so that, if there were imitation at all in the case, it would only be on the part of Sir Edward.

voluntary self-degradation, not unlike that of a minstrel who consents to intersperse his noble strains with the vulgar scurrility of the *jongleur*.

"What!" cries, in his emphatic style, Mazzini, in his criticism of the "Assedio," "do you, Guerrazzi, feel equal to the task of receiving the last groan, the last record of Florentine liberty—to launch it, as a war cry, to the face of your countrymen—and you stoop, like a commonplace novelist, to patch together fictitious horrors of one Naldo, one Lucantonio, and their obscure associates? In presence of a city basely bartered, basely betrayed, trodden by Italian and foreign soldiery, do you attempt to engage our sympathy for the fate of a betrayed individual? and whilst we mourn with you over the death of a whole people—whilst we stoop on the corpse of Florence, to feel if with its last breath there should emanate the promise of a second life for us—would you tear us from those sacred ruins, that we may be led to listen to the ejaculations of an ideal character, to his convulsive and frantic passions, to the ravings of his selfish hatred and love?"

But it is not by the form only that these two novels essentially differ. They are also animated by a different spirit. Not, indeed, that they view their subject with opposite aims, in as far as patriotic principles are concerned—for on this point it is nowadays hardly possible for two Italian writers to disagree. Both are equally ardent vindicators of the national cause; both derive from that last scene of the great democratic drama of Mediæval Italy—from that final struggle in which all the religious and political creeds of the nation were for the last time brought into the field—a word of admonition for their countrymen, to prepare them for that future strife which every man in Italy firmly believes to be at hand. But in Guerrazzi this patriotic idea developes itself in words of anger and despair. The patriot upbraids and denounces, fretting in a powerless impatience and indig-

nation. D'Azeglio's warnings are uttered in a voice of sorrow and hope—he soothes and comforts, and writes in a mood of calm though fervent sympathy.

By their taste and style, also, the two authors appear to belong to different schools. Guerrazzi, a Tuscan, is a classical—D'Azeglio, a Lombard, a romantic writer. The former works more on the imagination—the latter speaks more to the heart. Trained in the school of Alfieri and Foscolo, at war with all importation of ultramontane ideas, the author of the "Assedio" is an eloquent, but often a stiff and vapid declaimer. Brought up in the more recent school of his father-in-law, Manzoni, familiar with the metaphysical literature of Germany, D'Azeglio is a tender and pathetic, even though sometimes a languid and diffuse psychologist. The one is a rhetorician, the other a sentimentalist; the former has more nerve and muscle—the second more flesh and blood.

It would not be difficult to trace this difference between the Tuscan and Lombard taste back to the primæval ages, pervading every branch of literature and art, and owing, perhaps, to the Teutonic or Greco-Latin element prevailing in different proportions in the two distinct provinces. Certainly Titian, Correggio, and Tasso, are geniuses of a different stamp from Michael Angelo, Dante, or Machiavel.

We have hardly time to give more than the titles of the numerous Italian novels still remaining in our hands. We find among them a few containing illustrations of historical events in foreign countries*. One of the most

* "Franco Allegri, Racconto delle Avventure proprie e d' altri memorabili Fatti del Secolo XVI." Milan. 1833. 3 vols.

"Gli Ultimi Giorni dei Cavalieri di Malta, Racconto di Ifigenia Zauli Sajani." Malta. 1841. 2 vols.

"Il Cavalier Bajardo, Racconto del Secolo XVI., narrato da Matteo Benvenuti." 1 vol. Milan. 1841.

"La Casa Finnarnos di Spagna, Romanzo nuovo originale di D. A. Ferrary Rodigino." 4 vols. Milan. 1841.

"Racconti Storici d' Ignazio Cantù." Milan. 1838.

amusing was published anonymously at Milan, under the title of "Franco Allegri." This ideal personage, whose autobiographical memoirs are thus given to the public, was one of the many Italians whom political circumstances or love of adventure drove to foreign countries, during the frequent revolutions of the sixteenth century. Franco Allegri appears at the court of Mary, Queen of Scotland, in the train of David Rizzio's band of musicians; and after having been a spectator, and nearly a sharer of the fate of that unfortunate favourite, he repairs to the court of Catherine de' Medici, there to witness still darker deeds of treason and murder. The romance is written with spirit, and in a manner that reminds the reader of Gil Blas.

The downfal of the Order of Malta, in 1798, is well described, in two volumes, by an Italian lady, till very lately an exile in that island. It is well known that Walter Scott himself, already with a foot on his grave, was moved at sight of the castles and palaces of that last bulwark of Christianity; and was heard to mutter, that "it must go hard with him if he could do nothing of all that." He, however, most probably alluded to the siege of the island by the Turks, in the days of La Valette; the last cowardly surrender of the degenerate Knights of St. John to Napoleon being rather a discouraging theme for a man of the heroic disposition of Scott.

We have, thus far, noticed no other style of composition than simply the historical novel. Not because a few essays on domestic fiction may not be found among the works before us*; but because, with one or two excep-

* "Conal, Storia novissima di Virginio Soncini." 2 vols. Milan: Stella. 1835. (An ideal story belonging to modern times: the scene, Switzerland; the hero, an Italian; some account of Napoleon's wars in Spain.)

"La Capanna della Vendetta, Racconto di Bartolommeo Signori." 1 vol. Milan. 1835. (The scene in England or Wales, modern times.)

tions, Italian romances on modern manners are by authors of secondary merit, and several of them utterly unreadable. It is not difficult to understand why, in a country in which private life is teeming with incidents full of romantic interest, men of genius have hitherto limited themselves to pictures of manners and passions referring to bygone generations. Independent of the feelings of sorrowful pride with which a fallen race must naturally dwell on the memorials of the past—independent of the great moral, national scope, every author proposes to himself, of rousing the spirit of his fellow-bondsmen by his recital of their ancestral achievements—the same political reasons which have given a death-blow to Italian comedy must equally prevent the growth of what might be called the novel of life and society.

No author can abstract modern life from its religious and political associations, and no book could be printed in Italy containing any allusion to religious or political topics. In a country constituted on a basis of mutual toleration and freedom of inquiry, as England, politics become either a trade or a luxury; they are reduced to a mere shifting

"Avventure dei Gemini Fratelli Azor e Savo, e del loro Erede Clodoveo, Figlio di Azor, del Dr. G. Silvola di Milano." Milan. 1832. (Modern times, the scene at Constantinople.)

"Ettore Santo, Autobiografia di un Galantuomo come gli altri, pubblicata da Giuseppe Torelli." Milan. 1829. 1 vol.

"Il Vecchio Soldato, o sia alcune Scene del Secolo XIX. del già Capitano Italiano A. F." 2 vols. Milan. 1831. (Interesting military anecdotes of Napoleon's campaigns.)

"Una Scena della Vita comune, Racconto di Benedetto Bermani." Milan. 1836.

"Michelina, Scena Milanese del 1836, narrata da Temistocle Solera." 2 vols. Mil. 1841.

"La Donna, Racconti Storici di Angelo Usiglio." Brussels. 1838.

"Angiola Maria, Storia Domestica di Giulio Carcano." Milan: Manzoni. 1839. 2 vols.

of power from hand to hand—to a mere display of shallow partisanship or personal abuse. Every citizen feels that he and his fellow-subjects are essentially free; that the vessel of the state must sail progressively, however awkward the man, however obnoxious the party, whom popular favour may happen to intrust with the helm. Every one may afford to go to sleep in his berth, or, if he must needs watch the manœuvre or occasionally lay hold of a rope's end, he does it in perfect security, like a bustling passenger, glad enough of any occupation that will enable him to kill the time.

But in Italy politics are a matter of life and death. Every thinking being feels assured that his country can only exist by independence, union, and liberty—that a prolongation of the present state of things is little better than a lingering agony. There is no division of opinions in Italy, or it is only a matter of calculation and expediency. There is not a man, from the patriot who dies on the scaffold to the judge who pronounces his sentence and the headsman who executes it, but would unhesitatingly join the national cause, could he only see the practicability of a revolutionary attempt. Hence we invariably find the most trusty ministers of the wary despot secretly allied with the most daring conspirators; hence we have witnessed two revolutions in 1820, and three in 1831, effected with an almost incredible unanimity, without one drop of blood.

These feelings of civil and religious liberty being so decidedly uppermost in every mind and heart, whosoever attempts to portray modern life will find it impossible to get rid of those two prominent features. An author must either speak of Italy to the Italians, or say nothing. And what chances the novelist had, till late, of handling such subjects under the censorship of the police, the fate of Guerrazzi, Amari, Tommaseo, and a hundred others, ban-

ished for their authorship of works which had even been printed with the approbation of government, may satisfactorily demonstrate.

It is indeed singular, but true, that some indulgence was shown to those who write on old-historical topics; and that D'Azeglio's works, for instance, breathing the warmest patriotism, never procured for their author the crown of martyrdom. It seemed almost understood that the Italians were to be allowed the full benefit of the past; but let a novelist only drop a hint about *Carbonarism*, the *Black Pin*, the *Adelphi*, the *Italic Legion*, *Young Italy*, or any of those subterranean associations which were gradually undermining, and have eventually done so much by their unanimity and firmness towards overthrowing the despotism of Austria and her crowned lieutenants, and he soon saw whether the *Piombi e Pozzi* of Venice, or the dungeons of Spielberg, had yet any vacant room for his accommodation.

This circumstance accounts for the almost universal preference given to historical subjects in Italian novels. We might, indeed, wonder why the forbidden subjects are not at least treated by the many exiles living and writing abroad. But, not to take into consideration the danger of exposing their friends at home, such works would have little chance of making their way into Italy, and less of securing the attention of foreign readers.

The only novel on a recent subject which may be said to have won the suffrage of Italian readers, and of which we were enabled to obtain a copy, was "Angiola Maria," by Giulio Carcano, a very young Milanese, already known for some exquisite verses in the style of Manzoni. The heroine is a pure-minded, ingenuous girl, growing up unconscious of the charms of her loveliness in her father's home in the country, who, brought into contact with a fascinating stranger, an English nobleman, bestows upon him the treasure of her affections, only to be rewarded

with base desertion, and to die of a broken heart. The novel, as may be expected, is somewhat tinged with that ill-concealed animosity which the absurd conduct of some vulgar travellers has roused against the English name in many a generous heart on the Continent.

Three other works of fiction on analogous subjects were lately published:—the first at Naples, bearing the title of "Ginevra de' Palmieri;" the two others at Paris, "Il Siciliano in Parigi," and "Casilda;"—but none of these, which we have seen highly eulogised in foreign reviews, have yet reached our hands.

Such is Romance in Italy. Less fertile, no doubt, less amusing, less multiform, than in England and France; having almost nothing to correspond to the fashionable narratives by Blessington, Gore, and Hook—to the popular literature by Dickens, Hood, or Slick—or to the *psychologie en action* by D'Israeli and Bulwer; but free from the flippancy, from the exaggerations and conventionalities of the first school—from the hideous distortions, from the grotesque vulgarity of the second—from the obscurity and morbid transcendentalism of the last; but eminently lofty and pure—aiming at a great and worthy, however arduous, object—steadily and efficiently proceeding towards its final accomplishment.

CHAPTER V.

PELLICO.

Italian Drama—The Opera—Italian Music—Pellico—His Tragedies—His Memoirs—His Religious Ideas—Andryane—Spielberg—Francis I. of Austria—Foresti.

I HAVE been, perhaps, rather too minute in my enumeration of modern Italian novels, out of regard for the popularity of that style of composition with every class of readers. Not that I thought the Italians ever likely to evince as much predilection for romantic narrative as is every where prevalent in England, in Sweden, amidst a population of more primitive and domestic habits. "Il faut des spectacles dans les grandes villes." Rousseau has said it. The drama is the delight of the denizens of crowded cities. Novels are more properly the literature of a country-loving nation. Now, in Italy, no one who can help it resides in the country; and the short and merry season of *villeggiatura*, conveying for a few weeks all the luxuries of the city to some favourite spot on the Apennines, by the sea-side, or on the shores of the Lario, is not calculated to inspire the light-hearted people of the South with that taste for retirement and for those intellectual enjoyments which alone can embellish a country life. Readers of all classes, and men of refinement, in Italy, are to be found exclusively in town; and there it is but too natural that the *prestige* of scenic decoration, of music, and

general conversation, should incline a sensual and essentially *sociable* people to prefer the *social* enjoyment of the drama, or even the opera, to the cold perusal of a quiet novel at home. But there can be no midway in the decline and prostration of the intellectual powers of a nation. Even the drama and opera are in a deplorable condition in Italy. Even the miserable boast of musical excellence, the last subject of Italian pride, in the utter destitution of all other claims to supremacy, is disputed against that country by a Northern people with whom music was an acquisite faculty. Italian composers were charged, not always unjustly, with effeminacy, with unmeaning vapidity. Rossini and Donizetti were, at the best, sensual melodists: Mozart, Beethoven, and Mendelsohn alone could find strains worthy of thinking beings.

It was, perhaps, too true. Musical composition was the only marketable production in Italy. The Italian *Maestro* was allowed no leisure for thought. One *partition* followed another with the activity of James's novel-manufactory. It is not often that such productions are worth the trouble they cost. Opera-writing was mere jobbing in Italy, and it were vain to look for excellence under the circumstances.

The Teutonic nations are absurdly unjust to Italian music, nevertheless. The opera is their daily food all over the globe. That hybrid production they are so loud in abusing, though an exotic with them, is rapidly superseding all national and rational entertainment. They know nothing of Italian music, save only under the disguise of the shakes and *roulades* of the school of Rubini. This extraordinary man, whose rare powers were turned to the utter corruption of taste, has been but too long the representative of Italian music abroad. He was long upheld in London and Paris, when, we are sure, he would have been hissed off the meanest Italian stage.

A plain Italian, may be, knows not the real meaning of German profundity and philosophy of music. No creation

of human genius, in our estimation, comes up to Bellini's "Norma." We do not mean merely with regard to the unspeakable tenderness of its melodies, but to the loftiness of its character as a whole. The *cavatina* and one or two airs are, indeed, too sadly at the mercy of the singers, too utterly smothered under their *trillos* and *bravuras*, ever to be distinctly heard on the stage; but if the introduction and the two *finales* can be matched by any, even of Mozart or Beethoven's conceptions, we are content to submit to Marsyas', or even Midas', chastisement.

And, what is more, we are not alone in our appreciation of the respective merits of German and Italian composition; for "Norma" continues the never-failing resource of every manager in distress; whilst many are all the louder in their applause of Mendelsohn's truly inspired strains, as their ecstasies during the performance had more of the symptoms of a mesmeric trance.

But be it so, and may the superiority of German music be satisfactorily established in Italy itself. Better the last of Bellini's notes should die in utter oblivion, than the Italians should be nothing but the warblers and fiddlers of Europe. Nothing is to be hoped from Italy, till she is cured of that last miserable conceit. Be it said with Von Raumer, that "Norma" is "the *ne plus ultra* of false musical taste; a beggarly, tawdry, patchwork finery:" let us agree with Kotzebue, "that the ladies' maids of Berlin are more beautiful than the Medicean Venus:" or exclaim, with another German, that the vault of the Pantheon is "nothing better than a large oven."

The Roman and Teutonic races are waging a perpetual war against each other in every branch of literature and art, and they have carried their prejudice and animosity so far as utterly to destroy every idea of an absolute standard of taste.

It is time that the weaker party should give up the contest. The arts cannot, any more than poetry, abide with

an enthralled and degraded race. The conquered are wrong, even in matters of taste. Italian music, like painting and sculpture, is something retrospective, posthumous. It lives on old associations, on a reputation grounded on the achievements of bygone generations. Down with Bellini's music, perish Italian genius, if the country has not wit enough and art enough to shake the yoke off her neck. Time enough to talk of her glories when she has provided for her honour.

After what has been said of the opera, it would be needless to add, that the drama is, in Italy, at the lowest ebb. It was greatly to be regretted, that his more than devoted exertions in favour of religion estranged Manzoni from the lighter branches of literature, especially the drama, into which, notwithstanding his lack of really dramatic talents, he was likely, by repeated essays, to introduce a salutary revolution.

Deprived of his important countenance, the Romantic reform that had commenced under his auspices remained incomplete; and those of the modern dramatists, who are considered as belonging to his school, have been led from extravagance to extravagance, until the very name of Romanticism had fallen under the strokes of that most irresistible of weapons—ridicule.

This, however, only arose from the error of confounding the theories of the Romantic with the French school of Victor Hugo. Romanticism is an abstract, conventional term, by which the Italians designate the appropriation of literature to the age and country from which it springs; the consentaneousness with, and the influence upon the feelings, the wants, the creeds, the memorials, and the high destinies of man in the various stages of society, in which it finds him. Romanticism for us is Nature, that gave Homer to heroic Greece; Tacitus to degraded Rome; Dante to distracted Italy; Shakspeare to aspiring England. Romanticism we call the literature of the *Romance*

languages, as long as this is an emanation from the Romance virtues, Christianity, chivalry, patriotism.

That school was, therefore, not responsible for the aberrations of taste; for the exaggeration of tragic enormities, which, principally imported from France and Germany, had darkened the pages of a few frantic productions, now enjoying in Italy an ephemeral popularity. This is a general disease of the age, the result of the turbid humours, tainting the spirit; a depravation of feelings such as led the ancient Romans to their bloody games of wild beasts and gladiators; a deplorable mania, invading music and painting, ballets and operas, turning the stage into a slaughter-house, making heroes of ruffians and wantons, to blunt and drown sensibility, to give us ague, headach, and heart-sickness.

Such was not the Romanticism of Manzoni. There were in his school ideas teeming with vigour and youth, with life and activity; its principles were consonant with the newly awakened longings for political freedom, for moral and mental emancipation; its supporters appealed to all that was noblest or dearest in modern patriotism; they aspired to make of literature a matter of national pride—an instrument of social progress—an emanation from life.

The lessons of Romanticism could not be utterly lost, however unsuccessful its earliest specimens might have proved to be; neither could classicism be revived, although the present age had nothing to substitute in its place. Hence that state of uncertainty and dissatisfaction that prevents the people of Italy from following a determined course, and laying the basis of a national school. For, on the one side, the Greco-Latin type of beauty, noble and venerable as it is in its relation to the past, is utterly insufficient to the wants, and in opposition to the tendencies of the present; nor can any sympathy be established between the Italians of the nineteenth century, and the heroes of

fabulous Greece—between the patriots of young Italy, and that

"Race d' Agamemnon que ne finit jamais."

But it is, on the other side, not quite evident why the dramatic rules, the grim legends of the German and Scandinavian nations, should better suit the sunny imaginations and the lively feelings of a southern people. To substitute the imitation of Schiller or Shakspeare for that of Æschylus or Euripides would be a strange way of providing for the development of an independent national taste. The classical style of Greece and Rome is to be banished as something obsolete and alien. But is Italy to receive her models from *Oltremonti?* Are indeed the dramas, and the novel of Manzoni, more national productions than those of Alfieri and Foscolo? Is there among those romantic structures an edifice that can be considered as essentially belonging to a genuine Italian school? The Italians were glad to receive from their neighbours the example of that truly Teutonic independence with which they had shaken off the fetters of classical pedantry; but they did not mean that their idolatrous imitation of the classics should be superseded by an equally servile dependence on northern Romanticism.

The feelings that prevail in Italy on literary subjects have an analogous influence on all questions connected with religion and politics.

The Italians are certainly unanimous in wishing for the cessation of that state of vassalage in which they are held by Austrian preponderance. But the soundest part of the nation are fully aware that the assistance of French propagandists, or any other foreign interference, would be rather a questionable means of attaining national emancipation. In the like manner the best cultivated classes are keenly alive to the degeneration of their church; but they are not

quite ready to exchange Roman catholicism for Swiss or German protestantism: they are not so surely disposed, as some sanguine missionaries are willing to expect, to withdraw their allegiance from the Bishop of Rome, to acknowledge the supremacy of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Literature, church and government, must be Italian. The present state of things is, therefore, merely to be considered as an epoch of transition. The writers of the day endeavour to find a middle way between the barrenness of the ancient and the exuberance of the modern school—between Alfieri and Manzoni.

The subjects for all dramatic performances are invariably selected from modern history, from that inexhaustible mine of literary treasures—the middle ages—the age of chivalry—the crusades; from the national glories of the Lombard league, from the sanguinary deeds of Guelphs and Ghibelines, from the domestic tragedies of their petty tyrants, from the gloomy atrocities of the Roman and Venetian Inquisition. The feelings exhibited on the stage are those to which the heart responds; those of Christianity, chivalry, patriotism, and in so far they deem it expedient to obey the influence of romantic innovation. But their dramas are more or less rigidly shaped after the models of the ancients. The rules of Aristotle and Horace are still inviolable laws for them, and to these they are often, like Alfieri, compelled to sacrifice historical accuracy and *vraisemblance;* they must compress or stretch their subject, after a Procrustean process; they are forced to reject the most brilliant or the most touching episodes, however essentially belonging to it, lest they should interfere with their unity and symmetry of plan. The style is also strictly classical. The Italian language has during the course of five centuries strangely deviated from the original simplicity of the age of Dante. Antiquated by the Latinists of the fifteenth century, diluted by the prating *Cinquecentisti*, distracted by the raving *Seicentisti*, adulterated by the Gallomaniacs of the last

century, cramped by the academy *Della Crusca*, soiled by long flattery and servility, that noble language lies down, overcome and prostrated, an artificial construction of empty words; cumbrous, not rich; pedantic, not correct; with scarcely any of its original beauties, except its ever-fascinating melody. Poetry is in Italy a different language from prose. Nature suggested plain constructions, art adopted elaborate inversions. All that is simple and natural the poet rejects as vulgar. The poet never calls things by their names. His style is opposed to common life; as in the poems of Homer, all objects have a name among gods, a name among mortals. Hence an infinite number of ideas find no place in verse for want of expression, and poetry sounds like Greek to the ears of the multitude.

The Romantic school made vigorous efforts to strip Italian poetry of its tinselled frippery. Manzoni caused his Venetian senators to speak as they may be supposed—as they are known to have done. The modern *voi*, which had disappeared from the heroic style, ever since the days of Ariosto, to give way to the Roman republican *tu*, has been restored to the tragic dialogue by the author of "Carmagnola." With the same views he did not shrink from such forms as these:

> "Serenissimo doge, senatori.
> Su ciò chiede il consiglio il parer vostro.
> Sia lode al ciel, combatteremo alfine."

And similar expressions, which, simple, true, and natural as they are, would, however, have been proscribed by Alfieri as too closely approaching conversational triviality. By thus renouncing that false pomp and magnificence, Manzoni gained vigour and purity in proportion as he adopted ease and simplicity. He enriched his style with the spontaneousness of popular phraseology; he made his personages speak from, and consequently resemble, life.

The partisans of the conciliatory schools have thought otherwise; together with the frame of the classical drama, they deemed it expedient to revive the *beau-ideal* of heroic dialogue. They brought the poetical language of Italy back to the grandiloquence of Alfieri.

At the head of this cautious and transitory system are Pellico and Niccolini.

Had not the author of "Francesca da Rimini" been struck by the political vengeance of Austria in the very prime of youth, had not his lofty spirit been so miserably broken among the squalor and agony of his ten years' confinement at Spielberg, the Italian stage might have found in him one of its greatest ornaments. That juvenile performance of Pellico was on its first appearance in 1818, and continues to this day, the most popular tragedy in Italy ever since the palmy days of Alfieri. Its success is probably owing in great measure to the author's happy choice of his subject. In the universal interest evinced by every feeling being in favour of that erring and yet so lovely and unhappy Francesca, we have a fresh illustration of the never-failing result to be expected from an appeal to the sympathies of the people. That sweet name alone had a thrilling effect on the Italian hearts, long since blunted to the sorrows of Clytemnestra and Antigone. The story of Francesca was associated with that most touching episode in Italian poetry, that short and fugitive effusion of tender pathos into which the stern soul of Dante once, and once only, consented to melt. It re-awakened in their minds all the sweet allusions with which that melancholy story is so mystically blended.

Moreover "Francesca" was a tragedy of love. Unrivalled as he was in the exhibition of those passions that fell within the range of his powerful soul, Alfieri had yet left many of the chords of the human heart untouched. The guilty and yet undefinable connection between Don

Carlos and his step-mother, the virtuous but more than human devotion of Hæmon for Antigone, and what has been justly called the "hysterics" of Myrrha for her father, could hardly be called love. "The Italians," as Count Pecchio has it, "from the age of Petrarch down to the days of Ugo Foscolo, have had strange teachers of the tender passion."

But two or three scenes of Pellico's "Francesca" exhibit all that wild enthusiasm and transport, all that vague mixture of ardent and delicate feelings, which is indeed far from the "air-fed" Platonism of the worshipper of Laura, and from the "asthmatic" atrabilariousness of Jacopo Ortis. The feelings of Paolo and Francesca resemble as nearly as possible what is called genuine love among mortals.

We find also occasionally some of those flashes of patriotism which are now an indispensable ingredient in every literary work in Italy, and which cannot be easily comprehended by such among foreigners as are by political circumstances placed above the miseries of national degradation and vassalage. The following passage, for instance, never fails to be received with a thundering applause by an Italian audience, though it has in itself very little to recommend it to literary criticism. But it must be remembered, that however inappropriate such a language may appear, if we consider the state of Italy in the age of Francesca da Rimini, or the character of the personage that is made to utter such fine sentiments, there are among those enthusiastic applauders, or at least there were in 1820, thousands of Napoleon's veterans, in whose heart every word of that patriotic effusion found a willing echo;—a set of deluded and disappointed people, who might, perhaps, with a mixed feeling of pride and sorrow, remember the fields of Raab and Malojaroslavetz, where they were lavish of their blood for the cause of a foreign nation or of a foreign usurper,

by whom, after having been roused to the most sanguine expectation, and engaged in the most desperate enterprises, they were to be helplessly abandoned to their fate.

This speech, which reminds us, in some manner, of Petrarch's tender apostrophe:

"Non è questo il terren ch' io toccai pria," &c.

is translated from Scene V. Act I., of Francesca da Rimini.

PAOLO.*

Wearied of glory's visions, I return;
My blood has flowed, Byzantium, for thee,—
For thee I 've warred where hate was not my guide.
The clement emperor with honours vast
Has graced me; but the general applause
Depresses more than it excites my soul.
My sword seems stained in an ignoble strife
For stranger lands;—and have I not my own,
To whom her citizens are vowed in blood?
For thee, for thee, land of a high-souled race,
My Italy, I will contend. Outrage
On thee no foeman shall inflict unscathed,
Fairest of lands, on which the sunbeams rest.—
Mother of arts, thy dust is heroes' dust.
Thou hast aroused my sires to high emprize;
Valour and wit within thy breast repose,
And all that 's dearest to my panting soul
Within thee dwelleth, in my much-loved home."

It is especially to passages of this description that the earliest of Pellico's tragedies owes its popularity among the actors and audience of an Italian theatre, for otherwise it is in itself a juvenile production. The action, which, on account of the delicacy of the ruling passion on which the catastrophe mainly depends, was in itself a matter of considerable difficulty, could hardly be expected to be advantageously developed in the course of twenty-four hours, the

* For the translation of these lines I am indebted to the late Editor of the Foreign Quarterly Review.

legal space of time allotted to a tragic writer by the strict rules of classicism. The artifice to which Francesca has recourse, in order to conceal her unlawful affection towards her brother-in-law, by feigning a contrary feeling, by shunning his presence with horror, affecting an unconquerable hatred against him, on account of the involuntary occision of her youthful brother, is, according to our manner of thinking, irreparably injurious to her character, and too far below the ideal beauty of that single-minded Francesca of Dante, to whom, under the extenuating circumstances of previous attachment and compulsory marriage, we might have been not entirely unwilling to forgive her trespasses. By this trait of more than feminine simulation, Pellico has destroyed the effect which that

"light veil of melancholy,
Making her face look like a thing of heaven,"*

and that

"intense, unutterable sorrow,
Which, by the will of God, weighed down her heart,"†

had worked upon our souls.

This, and the exaggerations and rhodomontades in her lover's love speeches, and Lanciotto's truly marital blind-

* We can scarcely deny ourselves the pleasure of quoting these two lines, that sound so sweetly in the original.

"Francesca
Soavemente commoveva a un tempo
Colla bellezza i cuori e con quel tenue
Vel di malinconia che più celeste
Fea il suo sembiante."

† "Iddio m' ha posto un incredibil peso
D' angoscia sovra il core, e a sopportarlo
Rassegnata son io."

And the other "Bella,
Come un angel che Dio crea nel più puro
Suo strasporto d' amor!"

ness and Guido's (Francesca's father) indifferently portrayed character, are among the principal faults which strike the reader at the first glance. But there is enough of Pellico's tender, ingenuous and passionate soul diffused throughout the work to compensate for all its defects, and "Francesca da Rimini" will remain for a long time in possession of the popularity it originally met with on the stage.

"Eufemio di Messina" was also given to the public previous to the author's arrest at Milan, and was equally considered as the performance of a promising youth. The subject is as happily chosen though not equally familiar with that of "Francesca." But it required, perhaps, a greater power of imagination than fell to the share of poor Pellico to fill up the blanks that exist in the obscure records of the semi-barbarous epoch to which it belongs. The irruption of the Saracens of Africa into Sicily towards the year 830, under the guidance of a young renegade, whose wounded pride and blighted affections prompted him to plunge his country into endless calamities, is one of those many events of the Middle Ages so registered in the volume of history as to exclude every doubt on their authenticity, without however furnishing us with sufficient details to satisfy the curiosity that such extraordinary vicissitudes are well calculated to awaken. Similar subjects cannot be made the theme for poetry or the drama without building on those barren materials such a romance as may easily convey to our minds a plausible representation of the age and personages in whose fortunes we are expected to take an interest. These are precisely the themes on which such fancies as Shakspeare's or Walter Scott's are wont to perform their greatest wonders. Their imagination loves to expatiate in that empty field, and to conjure up a thousand phantoms of light, which soon gain so powerful an ascendancy on our imagination, and so perplex our judgment, as to render it difficult for us to distinguish

their chimerical personifications from the best defined characters with which real history has acquainted us.

The "Eufemio" of Pellico is powerfully depicted. He is indeed the rash, raving youth, who may be conceived to have turned an apostate and a traitor, under the influence of disorderly passions. His magic ascendancy over his Mussulman followers, the warm devotion of his brother-in-arms, Almanzor, give the character of the principal hero a dazzling lustre which captivates our admiration, notwithstanding the enormity of his crimes. He appears before us as one of those fated beings who must surpass all other mortals in guilt if they are prevented from excelling in deeds of virtue.

But Pellico's "Eufemio" is a single-sided picture. He comes upon the stage like one possessed by a relentless rage; all his tenderest, his most sacred emotions, his love, his patriotism find no utterance from his lips but in a voice of thunder and storm. His whole soul is preyed upon by a raving frenzy; he is driven from madness into madness, as a man urged on by the wrath of Heaven to his destruction. That fury never, for a moment, abates. It seems to have a contagious effect on every other actor on the stage, as well as on the poet himself. But wo to him if it does not equally operate upon his audience—if, by injudiciously submitting them from the very beginning to such an unremitting and exhausting excitement, he either wearies their minds with over exertion, or fatigues them with a distracting monotony!

The tragedies of Pellico that were either written, or rather meditated in the solitude of his dungeon (for he very seldom was indulged in the luxuries of pen and ink), and which were published after his release, are visibly affected by the prostration and languor of a broken spirit.

The subject of three of them is taken from the earliest period of the Italian republics, the successful struggle of the towns of the Lombard league against the emperors of

Germany, and their subsequent discords of Guelphs and Ghibelines. The Italians have lately turned their attention to that, for them, most important epoch, and the national songs of their bards, especially those of Berchet, have awakened a new enthusiasm on an old and long since forgotten theme. But it is a question whether the convulsions of that glorious era can be advantageously brought upon the stage. The victory, which for a few centuries secured to the north of Italy the possession of an almost absolute independence, was the result of the unanimous efforts of a sober, frugal, and hardy population, rather than of the heroic achievements of individuals. The names of those earliest champions of freedom or of their popular leaders have hardly been transmitted to posterity; there is scarcely among so many a single character rising above the level of the obscure multitude. The people, jealous of their equality, seem to have abolished even aristocracy of fame. There was in that epoch no hero, but a nation of heroes. Now, nothing is more difficult in dramatic poetry than the personification of a whole people. Poetry seems to cling fondly to individualism. The chorus, eminently a republican contrivance, was never even in Athens and Rome, with the exception of a few of Æschylus's primitive performances, intended to be the Protagonist. But in modern ages it has been altogether suppressed as an awkward encumbrance, at the best only fit to sing the interludes. Jack Cade or Masaniello, or any other most abject demagogue, can be raised to the dignity of a hero, but the stage can be no throne for the sovereign people. Hence Pellico found himself obliged to throw the people into the background, and to bring forward ideal heroes whose interests are supposed to be implicated in the great national contest, which thus becomes only an episode, in the same manner as the novelist, in order to fix the attention of his Scotch readers on a French subject, introduces his own Quentin Durward at the court of Louis XI.

Thus "Gismonda da Mendrisio," the first and perhaps the best of those tragedies, is a very able exhibition of a lofty female character struggling between the regrets of disregarded love and the powerless rage of vengeful jealousy. The destruction of Milan by Frederic Barbarossa, to which constant allusion is made, only appears as a remote and not very essential incident.

"Leoniero da Dertona," a sort of Christian Brutus, sacrificing his own son to secure the interest of the national cause, bears the date of the battle of Legnano; and, as in "Gismonda," the lieutenants or messengers of Frederic are brought in to remind us of that noble despot whom Pellico would have done better, if he had dared, to introduce personally to our acquaintance. In the "Iginia d' Asti" we perceive some attempts at giving the people voice and action. The madness of popular factions engross nearly the whole of the drama, and the gentle contrast of private affections seems to have been resorted to only for the sake of a happy diversion.

We never heard that any of these tragedies were brought before the notice of an Italian audience, every subject connected with national history being diligently proscribed by the provident cares of the Austro-Italian police. But we are convinced that the common classes in Italy are too ignorant of the annals of their country to be able to understand allusions so imperfectly and obscurely conveyed to their minds; and as the chief interest of those dramas was intended to lie on their historical importance, and their plans are otherwise ill-digested, and the style languid and neglected, they are not likely, even under more favourable political circumstances, to be ranked by the side of that favourite "Francesca."

We have also two tragedies by the same author on scriptural subjects: "Ester d' Engaddi" and "Erodiade." This last, which an Italian might be tempted to call "*La Saullessa,*" is, in fact, nothing better than a reproduction

of the "Saul" of Alfieri, under a female attire—a lofty and originally noble and righteous soul brought to evil by the violence of passion, and distracted by sleepless remorse, by a vague and powerless longing for regeneration and atonement. It is perhaps more than any other remarkable for that exaggeration and transport which pervades every page of Pellico's poetical works, strangely contrasting with the meek and resigned temper of the author's mind, such as it exhibits itself in his "Prigioni," and which may appear incompatible with the state of weariness and debility resulting from that long hour of torture, unless it is to be considered as the effect of that feverish dreaminess by which a morbid imagination re-acts upon an exhausted frame, and is almost unconsciously raised into a sphere of preternatural imagery over which reason has no control.

"Tommaso Moro" (Thomas More) is the last of Pellico's tragedies that has reached our hands, though we have heard "Il Colombo" mentioned as a novel performance lately received with great applause on the stage at Turin. On attempting an English subject of such vital importance, Pellico, as may well be expected, had no greater object in view than to bring forward new arguments in favour of the cause of Catholicism, which he has so warmly espoused. The martyrdom, as he calls it, of the Chancellor of Henry VIII., might undoubtedly suggest a few happy thoughts to a supporter of the supremacy and infallibility of the Church of Rome. But the classical style and heroic language in which the tragedy is written, would, to say the least, sound strangely to English ears; and it would be difficult to recognise the "bluff Henry" and his ill-fated minister in the staid, pompous personages which the poet has entitled to bear their names. "Tommaso Moro" is, to our judgment, the weakest of Pellico's theatrical performances.

But the name of Pellico is to remain attached to another work, that of which he himself is the hero.

The *Biographie Universelle* professes to give the public and private life of all persons who have distinguished themselves "by their writings or their deeds, their talents, their virtues or their vices." It does not allude to those who have become conspicuous for their misfortunes. Adversity, however, may have its own claims to immortality. Nine-tenths of Pellico's fame—out of Italy, at least—are owing to his sufferings. He, says, himself, that he is indebted for the revival of his religious feelings to his first night of captivity. His arrest was also particularly propitious to the spread of his name. He entered his dungeon with merely the reputation of a promising youth. He came out of it, bearing the palm of martyrdom, with a fame as fair as the cause to which he had fallen a victim.

"Le mie Prigioni," nevertheless, has obtained more popularity in England, in Germany, and in America, than it ever could meet with in Italy.

In happier countries, where the social order is permanently established,—among nations blessed with the influence of self-imposed institutions, secure from foreign aggression, free from the brand of foreign vassalage, what the general welfare most requires of the citizen is a sedate, well-disciplined temper. Every reluctant, ambitious spirit would prove but fatal to public tranquillity. But in Italy, at least in the Italy of 1820, in the midst of stifled passions and crushed ideas,—in a land of impotent struggles against violence, how would acquiescence in existing circumstances be interpreted but as cowardly stupidity? What would be the result of such a temper but to provoke more outrage, and secure impunity to the oppressor?

The "Prisons" of Pellico is not the work of a bigot,—not of a man who has forsaken his cause, or wishes for a

reconciliation with his unrelenting foe. It is the long, painful effort of a man who has traced his sufferings to his Maker, blessed him for the trial he was pleased to inflict, adored his will in his instruments. Sublime virtues! But the long solitude of his sorrows had made him alone: he had withdrawn himself from the cause he had served; he had stifled all the natural indignation of a patriot. He had pardoned not only his own wrongs, but those of his country. Spielberg was for him a cloister, with oblivion at its threshold. Italy wanted from him no political rashness, no vehemence; but there is a measure in all things. If all his countrymen should embrace his maxims, it would be over for ever with Italy.

We may drop a tear of sympathy on the narrative of evils that would have overcome the most heroic constancy; we may admire the self-possession of a victim who spares his executioner the expression of vain resentment and invective. But Italy must derive a different moral from the doctrines of Christ. Forgiveness of past injuries does not imply tame submission to present infliction.

The "Prigioni" is merely an ascetic book; it is the result of the long and painful struggle of a self-searching man. The author is affected with a kind of spiritual *hypochondriasis*, perpetually feeling the pulse of his conscience. Religion is with him the business of life. The activity of his mind consists of incessant efforts to tune itself for action.

He appears in his own book only as the frail vessel in the hand of Providence; his fortunes are exhibited merely as an episode of that great drama of which the universe is the stage. He is not the hero of his narrative neither is any one of his fellow-sufferers.

The real hero is that FATE which, together with Manzoni and his *co-religionists*, he bows to as the inscrutable ruler of this nether world: and all his pride is to show

how passively, how unconditionally, he had brought himself to submit to its decrees.

Pellico is even now living at Turin, pensioned by a charitable Piedmontese lady, walking arm-in-arm with a Jesuit, praying, praying!

The din of political convulsion, however pacific in its nature, reaches him no more; he has discarded politics as "a faithless mistress," and the patriotic agitators of the New Generation look upon him with more pity than interest. No man, it appears, can be a saint any more than a prophet in his own country.

Pellico dies forgotten; and he may thank his stars for that commiseration, that teaches forbearance. No man is accountable for the mistakes of nature. Nothing is less pleasing, doubtless, than a feminine man or a masculine woman. Yet such blunders are matters of daily occurrence. A woman's soul is too often sent to animate a man's frame. Hence a Pellico.

One of his fellow-prisoners, his warmest admirer, Andryane, admirably painted him. "Only among women, and the best of them," says he, "have I met with that tender piety, candour, unalterable kindness, and unlimited devotion which are his characteristics."

Which of these characteristic virtues could bear the prisoner up against the horrors of Spielberg? Religion alone had power to keep soul and body together; but it commanded the total abnegation of all other feeling.

Unwilling as he is to enter into any particulars respecting his trial in his Memoirs, Pellico does not, however, hesitate to disclaim all participation in the secret transactions of the *Carbonari*, or of any other political sect in existence. With all the editors of the *Conciliatore*, Pellico aimed at a peaceful and legal regeneration of the character of his countrymen, through the instrument of a living and sympathetic literature. He was one of the precursors of the

Moral Force party now in activity. His sentence of death, and subsequent condemnation to fifteen years' hard imprisonment, were only the result of the disappointment and baffled rage of inconceivably iniquitous judges, who sat with the determination of inventing, if they could not otherwise find out, guilt, and who, at the end of their fruitless researches, turned the edge of their sword upon the innocent, rather than acknowledge their impotence and the unsuccessfulness of their endeavours *.

To all that tenebrous work of judicial iniquity, Pellico himself obstinately suppressed all allusion. He wrote under the frowns of a Piedmontese Censor, and he thought it considerate to spare his Reverence the work of mutilation. He published a book priests and Jesuits had reason to be proud of.

It might be wondered, wherefore, if he must needs take up so dangerous a subject, he did not, like his friend Maroncelli, and so many other fellow-captives, seek a refuge beyond reach of Piedmontese and Austrian enmity, and put forth his work where he had only his conscience to compound with. But Pellico had no heart for self-banishment. He could accept every thing from God's, or what was to him the same, from a tyrant's hand. But to relinquish *home, his father*, and *mother, his two brothers and his two sisters—another family he loved as much as his own*—(these dear objects of his affection invariably come together like Ariosto's Paladins,

> Avino, Avolio, Ottone e Berlinghieri,
> Chè l'un senza dell' altro mai non veggo.")

* Silvio Pellico, born at Saluzzo, A.D. 1789; at Lyons with his sister, 1803; recalled to Italy by the publication of Foscolo's poem "I Sepolcri;" settled at Milan, as a tutor to Count Porro's children. "Laodicea" and "Francesca da Rimini," 1818; arrested at Milan, October 13, 1820; condemned to death at Venice, and, by commutation, to fifteen years' imprisonment, 1822; liberated, 1830, Aug. 1. "Le mie Prigioni," published, Paris, 1833. "Dei Doveri Degli Uomini," 1835.

and that merely to glorify truth—was not in the power of Pellico's nature.

Pellico loved like a woman—nay, like an Italian woman. His tenderness for his family was merely that second-hand selfishness which makes domestic ties in Italy paramount to the most sacred duties. Cowardice screens itself behind the mask of a pious regard for others, where it would not dare to plead its own safety or interest as a reason for deserting its post. An Italian mother charges an English woman with unnatural cold-heartedness, when the latter launches her only son, a mere stripling, amongst the horrors and perils of a seafaring life. In her blind, animal adhesiveness she hugs her own infant to her bosom; she robs him of his brightest prospects, of his very birthright as a man, sooner than put up with one minute's uneasiness on his account.

The heart, I repeat it, has too ample a share in Italian life. The long estrangement of that enslaved people from the great interests of public welfare, has concentrated all their sensitiveness upon domestic relations. To tear the youth of that country from "their mother's apron-strings," will be no mean part of that work of regeneration to which the well-wishers of Italy are now aspiring.

Pellico had no country beyond his mother's home. The evils of Italy never elicited one sigh from his bosom. He is only anxious to ascertain how many hairs of his father's head have been turned white by the fatal intelligence of his arrest—how many of his sisters have sought, in a nunnery, relief from sorrow at his loss—how many of his brothers turned Jesuits from the same cause.

What is not taken up by the enumeration of these domestic afflictions, is made up of daily bulletins of the state of the prisoner's spiritual health. Pellico's "Prisons" could equally be entitled his "Confessions;"—confession of his own no less than his neighbour's sins. For his epistolary intercourse with Giuliano is undoubtedly set down as an in-

stance of his own progress in the way of good, by a happy contrast with the irreclaimable perversity of his fellow-sufferer. Notwithstanding our good opinion of Pellico's veracity, this Giuliano is, we take it, an ideal personage. Its office is somewhat analogous to the *Goffo* or fool, introduced among the entertainments of a Sunday school in Italy, with a view to set off, by his quaint observations and impertinent questions, the superior wisdom and sound doctrine of the regular teacher.

Pellico was sent to Saint Margaret's a mere deist; he came out a stanch "Roman Catholic and Apostolic Christian." No restriction or compromise on his part. The church of his country has nothing in its dogma or practice to offend him.

I have, on such delicate subjects, endeavoured to keep within the limits of moderation, and spoken with respect of the tenets of a religion in which I was born and brought up, and for which, notwithstanding its corruption, German or English innovators have certainly not yet found a worthy substitute. I consider myself, at heart, as sincere a Catholic as Silvio Pellico himself. Nay more: I believe Italy cannot admit of, not understand, any but a Catholic form of religion—that which will equally suit all classes, all parties, and reconcile all opinions.

But it seems to me, nevertheless, that every friend of true religion in Italy ought to be aware that, however the traditions of their annals, long custom, and native adhesiveness may bind the Italians to what has long been the exclusive creed of their fathers, although they look at the cross not only as a sign of universal redemption, but as a standard of national reunion and regeneration, still the progressive attacks of Protestantism, and the sudden ravages of philosophy, have undermined the Catholic edifice where it had laid its deepest foundation; and the generous souls who show the greatest anxiety for its preservation inwardly feel, and openly admit, the necessity of

a reformation of its revolting abuses: only reformation, the most sanguine Italians flatter themselves, must be unanimous and simultaneous; it must be the work of mutual concession and compromise; the result of general progress and enlightenment; of a well-grounded conviction of the utter unprofitableness of mere dogmatic discussion. Emancipation of opinion must take place without schism or hostility.

The religious question is, however, hushed up at the present moment in Italy, both because the people are there struggling to establish freedom of inquiry on a sure basis, and because, contrary to all expectation, the first encouragement to innovation has, prodigiously, been given by the Head of the Catholic Church—by a man who, neither from the nature of his office, nor, perhaps, from the disposition of his mind and heart, can be supposed to entertain any partiality for religious debate.

But whenever the day for the discussion of such momentous topics arrive, it will be found that, with the exception of the catholic name, which will most assuredly be adhered to through patriotic pride and delicacy, and of a few harmless mysteries, and august rites, which will be, for an indefinite period, respected, partly through veneration, partly through policy, the general tenets of the creed of the Italians must be made consistent with the free use of unfettered reason.

The noblest pledge that the Italians gave of their being ripe for more generous institutions, was the general moderation—the tolerant, conciliating spirit that reigned among them; though I am grieved to say, that it was partly owing to the state of religious apathy into which they had fallen.

Whilst flagrant scandals, continual abuses, and tyrannical discipline, were conspiring with a progressive culture and a restless inquisitiveness to dishearten the most imperturbable zeal; whilst, in the general relaxing of the bonds

of prescription, every man was obliged to come to partial exceptions and restrictions—to choose his own way, and form, as it were, a distinct sect by himself, he must easily know how to value the advantages of freedom of thought, and feel disposed to look upon the opinions of others with that same indulgence and impartiality which he would fain have claimed for himself.

It is worthy of remark that, in a country where the number of freethinkers was so considerably extended, an open apostle of infidelity, such as Pellico painted in the character of his *Giuliano*, was rarely to be found. Infidelity was rather a fashion than a conviction. Catholicism was spurned by the learned and refined as something idiotic and vulgar. But before the people the sceptic repressed his sneers, and left to the illiterate his illusions and superstitions; envying, perhaps, in the secrecy of his heart, the peace and self-satisfaction which even those absurd rites seem to bestow on the believer, and which he could not find in all the subtleties of his logic. On the other hand, the good Catholic shook his head with compassion and charity—endeavoured to disbelieve his own eyes at the sight of so many of the noblest minds straying from the right path, and muttered between his teeth, "That the wisdom of man is but folly in the sight of God."

Under such circumstances, and with such honest convictions, the transcendent devotion of Pellico for his country's church, as at present established, appeared to me almost fabulous. He is not satisfied with asserting that it is altogether impossible to be "a good Christian and a sound logician without being a Catholic," but he is willing to uphold one by one all those doctrines which may be considered as most directly affecting the morals of the people; such as the belief in a temporal and eternal retribution in a future life, and the right granted to the ministers of the altar of remitting the sins of men, and mono-

polising the clemency of God on this and the other side of the grave: nothing startles, nothing puzzles him in the whole theory of purgatory, auricular confession, and indulgences.

Much of his time at Spielberg was taken up by his sweet intercourse with his confessors, though some of the reverend fathers were coarse and ignorant; others, arrant spies and traitors, were wolves in sheep's clothing. Many of his companions were equally smitten with this zeal for unburthening their conscience; and the good abate, Paulowich, was by a grateful emperor rewarded with an episcopal mitre for the eagerness with which he rid his penitents of the "perilous stuff," that lay heavy at their heart.

There is something to me inconceivable in the dread even the heroic Oroboni evinced of meeting his last hour without a spiritual adviser by his side: the mistrust of God's infinite goodness that makes a mortal apprehensive of appearing face to face before his Maker, without a priestly second to back him.

Neither would I combat confession altogether. With many of the Catholic practices, it came up in an age of darkness and violence, when the priest was looked up to for superior understanding no less than for greater purity of life. Consultation with him could be but salutary to the half-brutified layman, who sinned too often unconsciously; and there was, perhaps, no other means of bringing this latter to the confessional than the hopes and fears depending on the mystic formula of absolution. Men were deceived for their own good. The admonition and upbraiding of the holy man were listened to with an awe commensurate with the reliance on his sacred power. So long as the penitent had faith in the priest's mission, it was God's voice that thundered in his ears, through the confessional-grating.

It must be granted, likewise, that the church has always made great efforts to prevent or reform abuses in

an institution to which she attached a particular importance. Of the great mass of common priests only a few of the worthiest are entitled to the exercise of that ministry. Every penitent has the free choice of the director of his conscience. In some churches things are so provided as to prevent the penitent from being seen or recognised by the priest. Spiritual and temporal penalties are inflicted against any violation of the secrets of the confessional; but, exactly because all such measures fail in securing that religious practice against corruption and misuse, we have reason to infer that there must be in its principles a radical vice, which can only be cured by the abolition of the whole system. And yet confession has been to a certain degree misrepresented in some Protestant countries. It is generally supposed, for instance, that absolution tends to stifle remorse by opening too easy a way to a reconciliation with God. But every child before admission to the sacrament is taught, and every priest before uttering the form of absolution inculcates, that Heaven will never sanction his words, without a profound *contrition* for his trespasses on the part of the transgressor, a firm *purpose* never to relapse into them, and a prompt *reparation* of all such wrongs and scandals as by any human effort can yet be repaired. An able confessor does more: he dwells on the enormity of the confessed sin, on its consequences, on the dangers of habitual relapse, on the restlessness of a soul dissatisfied with itself, on the joys of conscious purity, on the hardness of heart naturally resulting from perseverance in evil, on the limits of the clemency of God, on the precariousness of life, &c. He awakens remorse where ignorance, habit, or self-indulgence had laid it asleep, and the confessional becomes not less a tribunal of penitence, as they term it, than a school of morals.

But, if we have dwelt so long on such details, it was not because we meant to write an apology for auricular

confession. In spite of all Sunday-school instructions and confessional admonitions, the ignorant classes do not sufficiently understand the meaning of *contrition*, *purpose*, and *reparation*. They feel only that a burden is pressing heavily on their heart, and that they can be easily relieved by running to a confessor, and laying it at his feet. In proportion as we ascend to the more enlightened classes, we find objections to confession of a different nature. We find a persuasion that the intuitive sense of good and evil, naturally printed in the human heart, and the precepts of the holy Scriptures, are a sufficient guide to enable every man to be the best director of his own conscience; we find a disdain at the idea of the necessity of the interference of a mortal mediator between the Creator and his creature; we find reason and passion combined against a practice that degrades man in the eyes of his fellow-being, and exposes the inmost folds of his heart to the gaze of another. These and other arguments have brought or are bringing the reign of the confessional to an end. The best Catholics have remitted their former frequency at the tribunal of penitence; others, in great numbers, have omitted it altogether. The women themselves, who, more modest and delicate, make it a point of feminine submissiveness to adhere to their pious practices, have been obliged to yield to the influence of example; and those impertinent intruders, formerly known under the name of directors of conscience, have been in many instances dismissed.

The fondness of the captives of Spielberg for the performance of this religious duty, this necessity of settling their scores with Heaven, through the agency of an *imbecile* or else of a rogue, is, therefore, utterly inexplicable, unless it be ascribed to a fond desire on their part of attaining the glory of "confessors," as they were already fully entitled to the appellation of "martyrs."

For the rest, all that could only be guessed at in the

timid and drivelling "confessions" of Pellico was fully borne out and made evident by the more circumstantial and unsparing narrative of that long tragedy of Spielberg, given by Alexander Andryane*. The work of the latter, so much less known, is, however, a most necessary complement to the former performance. M. Andryane has left nothing untold—he has weighed every sigh—measured every inch of suffering. We had, till the publication of his Memoirs, only been allowed to roam around that gloomy stronghold of Moravia, or had heard, at most, the voice of poor Pellico rising faintly from his cell, as he sought peace and consolation in solitary prayer. But the prison-doors were now thrown open, the graves of Ressi, Villa, Moretti, and Oroboni, the madness of Pallavicini, the mutilated frame of Maroncelli, and the walking skeletons issuing from that living tomb—all were now brought with painful distinction before our view—the wrecks of a long imprisonment, which had blunted their feelings even to the sensation of pain, and plunged them into a stupor from which the very tidings of their deliverance could hardly arouse them.

We confess we did not desire so minute a recital of harrowing details, knowing how difficult it must be for the sufferer to avoid indulging in lamentations or invectives liable to the charge of exaggeration or petty vindictiveness. We agree with Confalonieri, in doubting the expediency of such a work, and honour his motives for maintaining a dignified silence on the subject of his wrongs.

The tragedy of Spielberg, with all its atrocities, is now exhibited before us; and, together with the speechless horror to which it gives rise, there springs up in our mind a feeling of wonder at the thought, that all this

* Mémoires d' un Prisonnier d' état au Spielberg, par A. Andryane, compagnon de l' illustre Comte Confalonieri. 4 vols. Paris, 1837.

unspeakable infliction of torture was the work of a man, not constitutionally cruel, but merely acting under the impulse of imbecility and cowardice.

Francis I. of Austria had been thrice on the brink of ruin. Thrice had he fled before his enemy and purchased peace on the most ignominious terms. Restored to his throne by a miraculous intervention of Providence, in 1814, he had made up his mind to close his career in peace, convinced that he had nothing more to fear from political subversions. The Italian Carbonari came to arouse him from this pleasing delusion. At the first announcement of the movements of Turin and Naples, all the terror of the Convention, the Directory, the Hundred Days, rushed to his startled fancy. Fear over-ruled his puny intellect. His dread of secret societies knew no bounds; his thoughts could find no rest, even within the walls of Schönbrunn, until the great arcana of the Carbonari were fully laid open: he over-rated the extent, the power, the depth of the conspiracy; he gave the countrymen of Macchiavello more credit for plots and intrigues than they eventually proved to deserve, and was irritated by the unconquerable passive resistance which his prisoners equally offered to his kindness and rigour.

Such a mind, haunted by phantoms, and naturally mean, is a ready prey to the arts of designing and evil-minded men, who find means to turn these weaknesses to their own advantage, and raise their fortunes upon the field of intrigue and crime.

Francis gave himself up to the guidance of such men, especially the execrable Salvotti, and the cowled friend Don Stephano Paulowich.

He found in his Tyrolese commissary an agent who not only entered into his master's views with all the zeal and fervour which aspiration after royal favour could inspire, but confirmed, and even exaggerated, his fears, and magnified the imminence of the danger, and the extent

of the evil, with a view to enhance the importance of his services and his claims to imperial gratitude; and who, moreover, acted with an eagerness and perseverance, an unblushing effrontery, a bullying arrogance, which had power to awe and alarm, even where he failed to cajole and seduce his victims.

Yet was the genius of the arch inquisitor foiled. Notwithstanding the ignominious terms of full impunity, and the rewards offered to the prisoners if they would only "abjure and reveal;" notwithstanding some moments of unguarded weakness, and some misunderstandings, the great trial drew to a close, and the sentences were pronounced; but the prisoners carried their secret along with them to their place of punishment, with so jealous a care, that it remains to this day, in great part, a mystery; and that, according to a popular saying throughout the country, "the charcoal bag (il sacco del carbone) was shaken, but not opened, the dust flew off, but the coal itself lay too deep for all the ingenuity of Austria to reach it."*

Long after the trial, when the whole country lay still at his feet, when he had secured his most dangerous enemies at Laybach and Spielberg—that fatal secret still haunted the imagination of the pusillanimous emperor. He felt like the mariner in the fable, to whom the winds of the ocean were given tied up in a wine-skin, and who expected, at every moment, that the bag might burst, and the imprisoned winds rush out and blow up him and his vessel. Full of these apprehensions, he occupied himself incessantly with the care of his prisoners at Spielberg; none of its inmates was ever allowed any article of food or dress, any petty comfort, without his immediate consent and direction. With a scrutinising diligence, little consistent with

* An allusion to the name and origin of that famous sect which, as it is well known, arose in the time of Napoleon among the woodmen and charcoal-burners (carbonari) of the Apennines.

imperial dignity, he presided over the measurement of the prisoner's chains; he appointed every officer of the establishment, nor could any of the governors, doctors, chaplains, or turnkeys long enjoy his favour, or give him full satisfaction. He was, in fact, the head-jailer of Spielberg. From Pellico's spectacles and Dr. Foresti's wooden fork, to the pillow of the Countess Confalonieri*, and the fetter-worn leg of Maroncelli—nothing could be received or disposed of, nothing donned or doffed, without a special imperial warrant.

Strange to say, in the exercise of these paltry, no less than harassing rigours, the emperor thought, all the time, he was acting with unbounded magnanimity.

Those prisoners—it had been satisfactorily proved before competent tribunals—were guilty of high treason; the most heinous of crimes in the eyes of the laws of all countries. They had been found guilty and sentenced to death. He, the ruler, by the grace of God, had only to allow justice to take its course, and he was rid for ever of his dangerous enemies. And yet—unheard of mildness and clemency!—he had spared them. He had given their lives to the solicitations of their relatives: instead of the short pang of execution, he destined them to the lingering torture of the "Carcere Duro."

Nor did his royal benignity stop even here. Their former condition, age, or infirmities, unfitted most of them

* The pillow on which that heroic woman had rested, and which had received her tears during her journey from Milan to Vienna and back, to solicit her husband's life at the emperor's feet; and during which time she travelled day and night, hardly ever quitting the post-chaise, and outspeeding mails and extra couriers—all the time in a state of breathless suspense, and with the anguish of despair at her heart—had been sent by her to her husband on the eve of his setting out for Spielberg, as a last token of her unshaken, though unsuccessful, devotion. But even the comfort of this pillow was an infraction of the *rule*, and the prisoner was compelled to part with it.

for the hardship of that fearful punishment; the law spoke plainly, inexorably, nevertheless. The nobleman, the priest, the scholar, should have shared the lot of the commonest felon. Was it the Emperor's fault, if his prisoners were too tender or too nice for the hard bed and harder fare, for the disgusting cookery Austria regales its galley-slaves with? They were rescued from the scaffold on condition that they should submit to such treatment. The law has no regard for ranks and persons; and although the Emperor exercised an absolute sway over the law itself, yet he could not too freely use his privilege, without patent injustice to the generality of all his other imprisoned subjects.

Yet did the good Francis slacken the reins of the iron law in favour of his unfortunate state prisoners. He doled out his bounties to them with a sparing, but, according to his own views, merciful hand. Did the prisoners object to the offensive mess that was set before them under the appellation of soup—they were at liberty to starve on a half allowance, or one-fourth of allowance, with the sick at the hospital. Did they apply to him for permission to labour in the open air with common malefactors—his Majesty, in consideration for their weakened frame, gave them stockings to knit, and lint to make; and when they complained of this as an aggravation of punishment, he observed, sneeringly, in allusion to the latter-named employment, "are they not philanthropists!"

It is even thus that weakness and stupidity in one invested with supreme power is apt to prove more fatal than the most consummate iniquity. Even in this manner did Francis of Austria forgive, pity, and love his enemies. His paternal heart was ever with them. He had a detailed plan of their gloomy abode, a minute account of their daily and hourly employment. Spielberg was to him a toy on which to exercise his ingenuity.

The searching of the state dungeons, the examination of

every corner of the apartments, of every article of furniture, of every seam of the prisoners' clothes—the daily, weekly, yearly visits of superintendents, governors, general officers, and Aulic councillors, vexatious as they may have proved to the victims themselves, evince, nevertheless, the unspeakable interest the Emperor took in their welfare. Their welfare, it is true, must be provided for, as consistently with a strict compliance with the letter of the law as might be found practicable; but the law itself must actually give way in every case of alarming exigency.

The Emperor, moreover, owed it to his own no less than to the state's security to pursue towards his prisoners that system of espionage, by which they had been harassed even to madness during their trial. The worming out of their fatal secret was made a matter of the utmost consequence to their own well-being. Not only were threats and promises used to accomplish this all-important end, but the officers of religion were pressed into service. The confessor was charged with the fulfilment of a duty in which the deepests arts of the inquisitor had failed.

The great object of the Emperor's cares, besides the alleviation of the prisoners' evils, was their eternal salvation, their conversion through recantation and confession. The revelation of their, in a great measure, imaginary plots would have led to an immediate mitigation of the horrors of prison life, and would eventually end with their reconciliation with their emperor and their God.

Under such circumstances, silence and apathy were the only defensive weapons—the only resource left to the prisoners. A dignified contempt, a passive contumaciousness, was sure to drive, as it actually drove, their royal gaoler to madness. Francis I. sunk to his grave without knowing his prisoners' secret. They were guilty—that he was fully satisfied of—for Salvotti and other judges of the same nature had asserted it. But in what that guilt really consisted—how many of their accomplices had evaded the

rigour of the law, remained with him, to eternity, a matter of doubt.

It was that which shortened the Emperor's days; that it was which constituted the immortal triumph of the martyrs of Spielberg. This disastrous victory was, however, purchased at a high rate. Confalonieri languished for the whole period of his confinement in a bed of sickness, and was only released when death had all but achieved his work. Oroboni's bones, Villa's, and others' are bleaching in the little cemetery at the foot of that Moravian Golgotha. Of the survivors, Maroncelli left one of his limbs behind; another, his eye-sight; others, their manliness; others again, their reason!

Out of so many, one only seemed to rise superior to all mental or bodily anguish. Andryane has depicted him in a few words, as "the man with the stern look and bushy eyebrows, who appeared to bear his fate in such a manner as ought to have reconciled his companions to their own. He bore himself up, like Ajax, muttering between his teeth, 'I will foil them yet, even though the gods oppose me!'" That man was Felice Foresti. He was the first arrested, the last set at liberty. For full fifteen years he was shut up in the darkest of their dungeons. His silent stubbornness, his indomitable pride, called upon him all the most ingenious severity of his craven tormentors; yet his unwearied longanimity baffled them. He contrived to fatten on viands by which poor Pellico was sickened to death. He knit and made lint with the assiduity of an industrious housewife. He had a withering smile for every new infliction of suffering; but when goaded into real passion, his gaolers trembled before him. They called him the "Feroce Foresti." His cell was dreaded and shunned like the lion's den. Priests and commissaries were fain to let him alone.

Out of so many that left those dungeons mere wrecks of humanity, he alone came out unbroken. He may be seen,

even now, walking erect, cheerful, about the streets of New York. Mild, affable in his manners, he is the darling of the boarding-school girls, to whom, for his subsistence, he gives instruction in Italian; looked up to by the whole community; and yet plain, unassuming, as if unconscious of his victory in the severest struggle mere mortals were ever made to undergo.

O my Foresti! O steadfast heart!—fifteen years entombment at Spielberg have not left a furrow on thy brow, not turned a hair of thy head! Pellico and Confalonieri are enough to hallow any cause, but it is only heroic endurance like thine that can make it victorious!

CHAPTER VI.

GIUSTI.

Italian Drama, continued — Niccolini — Lyrical Poetry — Leopardi — Berchet—Giusti—The Fine Arts—Gambardella.

But the tragedy of real life has too long called away our attention from the drama, which was the main subject of our present observations.

By the side of Pellico no man is entitled to be named as having reached any eminence in that style of composition, save only Giambattista Niccolini*.

Niccolini commenced his literary career several years earlier than either Pellico or Manzoni. His first tragedies, "Polissena," "Medea," "Edipo," "Ino e Temisto," &c., altogether belong to the old classical school. The romantic

* Giovan Battista Niccolini, born at San Giuliano, near Pisa, 1785; Professor of History and Mythology to the Florentine Academy of Art. "Polissena," Crowned by the Academy Della Crusca in 1810. "Ino e Temisto," "Medea," "Edipo," "Nabucco," "Matilde," "Antonio Foscarini," "Giovanni da Procida," 1830. "Ludovico il Moro," 1834. "Rosmunda d' Inghilterra," 1839. "Arnaldo da Brescia," 1844. Niccolini has also achieved a translation of "Cœphori," by Æschylus. "Matilda" is an imitation of Horner's "Douglas;" and we have, by the same author, a reproduction of Shelley's "Beatrice Cenci." His works in prose consist of philological treatises and academical discourses; together with some contributions to the "Antologia," the only good Italian Review, suppressed in Tuscany at the instigation of the Austrian government.

ideas did not take root in Tuscany so rapidly or so thoroughly as in the north of Italy, where a greater proportion of Gothic and Lombard blood, and the climate itself, seem to give the people a more northern cast of mind, and where, in consequence, the German taste might be expected to meet with a more favourable reception. His reputation, however, was established soon after the fall of Napoleon, by his "Nabucco," an allegorical drama, in which, under the names of the Assyrian king, and Vasti his mother, Amiti his wife, &c., the poet very ably portrayed the characters of Napoleon, Letizia Bonaparte, Maria Louisa, Francis of Austria, and all the greatest actors of that fearful drama of which our fathers were witnesses. This dramatic satire obtained a great popularity, as a novelty, in and out of Italy. As a tragedy we need scarcely mention it, not only because the Italian governments have banished it from the stage, but because it could not appear upon it with success, without borrowing its interest from occasional circumstances.

Niccolini's masterpiece is "Antonio Foscarini," which, among the works of living authors, can alone dispute the palm of popularity against "Francesca da Rimini." A few years later appeared his "Giovanni da Procida," the first instance in which an Italian has attempted to give his own version of an event on which the French and other foreign authors had thrown perhaps more odium than could be consistent with justice and truth. After an interval of several years, during which the author was busy at his "History of the House of Swabia," he published his "Rosmonda d'Inghilterra;" and is now preparing, what is by his friends considered his noblest performance, "Gregorio VII."

"Foscarini" is a Venetian subject, and belongs to that dark and bloody period of history, when the Republic, encompassed all around by its continental territories, and closely pressed by the grasping and perfidious policy of

Spain, found itself obliged to provide for its security by that deplorable system of suspicion and espionage which branded the name of Venice with eternal infamy, and which has been rather undiscerningly applied to the remotest ages of her unsullied glories, and even to those last times of dotage and torpor which preceded her final downfal.

"Foscarini" is indeed a tragedy of terrors. The timid and careworn tenderness of Teresa Contarini, the lofty and daring devotion of her ill-fated lover, can hardly be said to form a diversion from the gloomy impression produced on our minds by the appalling, though evidently exaggerated, portraiture of those tremendous inquisitors. Loredano, to whom Niccolini knew how to give a horrid beauty, new even after the Philip and Cosmo of Alfieri, seems with his gigantic figure to occupy the whole of the stage; his voice rises like a death-knell above the murmur of the trembling multitude—he stands alone, secure on the long habit of undisputed power, a type of fearless, unrelenting, sublime despotism!

"Giovanni da Procida" was, perhaps, intended as a counterpart to the preceding tragedy. The just hatred and formidable vengeance cherished for seventeen years with all the fondness of a first love, and treasured up in the heart of the promoter of the Sicilian Vespers, could hardly be felt with sufficient depth and intensity by any dramatist born out of Italy. The extent to which personal resentment, in less enlightened ages, was carried by the glowing hearts of that southern people—and of which the traces are still to be found in the wildest districts of Sicily, Calabria, and Corsica—directed, as it was in this instance, to the vindication of national rights, and sanctified by feelings of patriotism and loyalty, was an eminently Italian subject, and could not fail to find an echo in several millions of hearts, which only want sufficient courage or unanimity to emulate the bloody execution of their Sicilian

ancestors, or perhaps only "bide their time." The Austrian ambassador seemed at least to think so, when, after the first recital of Niccolini's tragedy, and its astonishing success before a Florentine audience, he obtained, by his warmest remonstrances, from the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the suppression of that dangerous piece, and replied, to those who affected to be surprised at his dislike for a drama whose ostensible aim was to cure the Italians of their Gallomania, that "however the direction seemed meant for France, the letter was evidently intended for Austria." (La soprascritta è pei Francesi, ma la lettera viene a noi.)

The delineation of Procida's character, by which the Italian tragedy appears to us vastly superior to all that has been done on the same subject in France or England, is however the principal—perhaps the only merit of Niccolini's work. The love romance which, as in duty bound, he has deemed it expedient to attach to the main catastrophe, is both complicated and uninteresting. Niccolini is, like Manzoni, rather a poet than a dramatist. His plots, with the exception of Foscarini, are invariably bad; even in his juvenile Greek imitation, when he was yet a votary of classical superstitions, Niccolini departed from that chaste and severe simplicity with which Alfieri had characterised the modern Italian theatre. When, in progress of time, he partly entered into the romantic views, and, choosing his themes from Venice or Sicily, allowed himself more ease and latitude in the arrangement of his five acts, he felt as a prisoner who, in the first trance of his unexpected release, seems hardly to know what to do with himself. There are scenes in his plays, and even whole acts, which seem introduced merely with a view to lead the poet to a display of fine sentiments in some favourite speech, or to cover a blank which his ingenuity was otherwise at a loss how to fill up. All such imperfections are set down in a stiff and inflated, but concise and vigorous, eminently lyrical, rather more than dramatic style, and by

frequent flashes of that theatrical sublimity which the French consider as the characteristic gift of Corneille's genius. It must be confessed that many of those dazzling passages have power to fascinate the imagination ere reason is consulted as to their appropriateness and opportunity. When Teresa in her fatal intercourse with her lover, apologising for her involuntary breach of faith, dwells with a heart-rending picture on the long mental torture by which she was led to her abhorred nuptials, Antonio Foscarini interrupts her with this rather convenient than orthodox doctrine*.

"No more! drive not my aching brain to madness!
No vows are binding which the heart disowns:
A hasty word wrung from the victim's lips
Is not so rashly registered in heaven.
God's angel writes it not: or if 'tis done,
His tears efface it from the eternal page."

Loredano, disturbed in the administration of his inquisitorial justice by the loud cries of a popular tumult, seeing his less firm colleague start up with an involuntary fit of sudden panic, strikes his hand on the table, proudly exclaiming†—

. . . . . "I shall not
Rise from my seat; not I:—e'en thus my fate
I 'll meet! eternal shame on him who dares not
Die seated as I am."

Again, when Foscarini, having heard his sentence, in those last moments in which "the sunset of life gives him

* . . . . . "Taci, divien furore
La sofferenza mia; Ma che? doveri
La vittima non ha; l'angel di Dio
Quella parola che non vien dal core
Nel suo libro non scrive o scritta appena
La cancella col pianto."

† . . . . . "Io no, non sorgo
Dal tribunal, lo premo:—Infamia eterna
A chi non muor seduto!"

mystical lore," is made to prophesy the last day of Venice, alluding to the inglorious fate it was to meet in our days at the hands of Napoleon, Loredano interrupts him with a bitter smile, turning to his colleagues *—

. . . . "Near his end, his mind is clouded
By the shadows of death.—Here man may die,—
Venice is everlasting.

FOSCARINI.

God alone
Is everlasting."

These sudden sallies of genius, which suffer severely from translation, and still more from being abstracted from their respective places, are evidently of the school of Alfieri; but could, without any great effort, be translated into a less heroic and more human style. But it is precisely this constant aiming at an artificial sublimity, this fondness for lofty, pithy laconisms, this pompous rhetorical display, which gives the Italian classical style a stiffness, a turgidness, a bombast, repugnant to reason and most fatal to all stage effect as inconsistent with the language of nature.

This style, into which the Italians have been led by their worship of the Greek stage, and by their long dealing in heroic subjects from Greece and Rome—where, on account of our imperfect knowledge, we must be satisfied with an ideal representation, or with a reproduction of what the ancients themselves left us in their writings or in their works of art—becomes utterly intolerable when adopted as the every-day language of personages whose life can be nearly identified with ours. Thus, however a

* LOREDANO.

. . . . . "Ei presso a morte
Delira già—qui l' uomo sol perisce
La repubblica è eterna."

FOSCARINI.

Eterno Iddio!"

queue or a three-cornered hat may be thought unbecoming in a work of sculpture, we would rather never set our eyes on a statue of Washington again, than see the American patriot seated, in a Jove-like attitude, on a curule chair, and dressed in the costume of Cæsar or Brutus.

These habitual, and as it were legalised anachronisms of language, bring with them, as a necessary consequence, a corresponding violation of local usages, manners, and feelings, and an unavoidable breach of all illusion. As in the ancient Italian extemporary comedies, the actors were always *Pantalone, Florindo, Rosaura,* etc., and the scene always "in una cittá d'Italia," so in a classical tragedy, the personages ought to have no name, but should be uniformly called "Il tiranno, l'amoroso, la prima donna," etc., and the scene laid in any age or country, anywhere, in space. These remarks especially apply to the most recent of Niccolini's tragedies, "La Rosmonda," of which we must say, as of Pellico's last performance, that we like it less than any other of the set.

"Fair Rosamond"—one of the sweetest, one of the bloodiest episodes in the romance of English history—has more than once appeared on the stage in all countries. An Italian poet is quite welcome to English subjects, by the same reason that English poets and novelists make free (and a very sad work they generally make of it) with subjects taken from the inexhaustible sources of Italian history. But the difficulty of describing times essentially belonging to, yet divided by an interval of centuries from our era, must be considerably increased by those slight, and vague, but not less indelible features by which, owing to ancient traditions, to the influence of language, climate, and political institutions, every one of the European families is individually characterised.

It is, indeed, the gift of supereminent genius so to copy from nature as to give us portraits that will equally hold true in all ages and countries, and thus Shakspere's Juliet

is, perhaps, equally English and Italian. But it more generally happens that the author's soul is transfused in the character of his hero, and in that case the portrait may be perfectly true to nature, notwithstanding a manifest violation of local *vraisemblance*. Thus it has been justly remarked that Schiller's Marquis of Posa is rather a German than Spanish hero: but Niccolini's "Rosmonda" is neither Italian nor English—is neither modern nor ancient: it is a mere abstraction, a something chimerical, conventional, unnatural. There is not a phrase, not a word, that we could for a moment imagine to have been spoken at the court of Henry II., or in the solitude of Woodstock. Eleanor of Guienne is much more like Medea than the accomplished, though rather gallantly inclined princess that we know her to have been. Tebaldo, an Anglo-Norman knight, has no more courtesy of manner than the vilest cut-throat. Walter and Edmund de Clifford, who repair to Oxford to pay their homage to their liege sovereign, speak to him in a language that would not ill suit a Virginius or an Icilius. Now it is an assured fact that a princess of Aquitaine may be as profligate, as jealous and vindictive as a queen of Colchis; but could a Christian princess, on her first acquaintance with an English noble, her husband's favourite, make use of such plain expressions as these?

* . . . . . "Pity or fear
Were never known to me: revengeful pride
And thirst for blood alone rage in my breast.
Dost see? this dagger was Aladdin's gift,
He who alone *could* love, for whom my fame,
My throne I fain would lose. The Norman heart
'S cold, inconstant. This my hand, Tebaldo,
Knows how to strike: whoever dare usurp
My Henry's heart, one instant shall not live."

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* . . . . . "Pietá, paura!
Io mai non le conobbi e questo core

The noble queen does not fail to make her word good at the end of the fifth act by stabbing her fair rival with her own hand, with a fiendlike refinement of cruelty!

In the like manner, there is no doubt that English peers were wont to stand up for their rights and privileges with daring independence, and speak their mind very freely before the throne; but they were at least so polite as to head their speeches by a "May it please your majesty," or by some other similar forms of conventional etiquette. What then shall we say of the tribune-like invectives by which Henry II. is attacked by his vassal, Walter de Clifford, before the assembly of his barons?

* "HENRY II.

Who 'rt thou? Why dost thou hide thy shield
Under those sable veils?

WALTER DE CLIFFORD.

Alas! no less
Dark is the glory of my outraged name;
Nor shall this shield shine in the sun again
Till full revenge has washed its stain with blood.

* *

Batte sol per l'orgoglio o pel delitto.
Vedi . . . è il pugnale che Aladin mi diede,
Aladin che mi costa e regno e fama,
Ma seppe amarmi. Il vil Normando ha gelida,
Alma incostante; io so ferir, Tebaldo,
Nè un solo istante palpitar protrebbe
Quel cor che osava d' usurparmi Arrigo.

* "ARRIGO.

O tu chi sei, cui bruno velo asconde
L'impresa dello scudo?

GUALTIERO.

Ah! d' esso al pari
La gloria del mio sangue è fatta oscura;
Nè poserà su queste insegne il sole
Se pria non splende sulla mia vendetta.

HENRY.

Kneel'st thou not, haughty vassal, to thy king,
Nor vowest fealty to thy sovereign liege?

WALTER DE CLIFFORD.

Dost thou then render justice to thy vassal?

HENRY.

Who 'rt thou? I know thee not—

WALTER DE CLIFFORD.

The fault is thine.

HENRY.

So bold in thine old age!

WALTER DE CLIFFORD.

With closing life,
True liberty draws nigh."

The whole play is written after these views; and, as it is, we cannot help expressing our wish that Niccolini should betake himself to his Greek and Roman subjects, or lay his scene in ancient Egypt, Bactria or Babylon, at the

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ARRIGO.

Non ti prostri al mio soglio, e al re prometti
Come gli altri vassalli aita e fede?

GUALTIERO.

Rendimi pria giustizia.

ARRIGO.

Oh ciel! chi sei?
Non ti conosco.

GUALTIERO.

Ed è tua colpa.

ARRIGO.

Audace
Così nella vecchiezza!

GUALTIERO.

E allor vicina
La vera libertà."

court of some imaginary king; and crowd his stage with pattern heroes with soft sounding names, after the fashion of Metastasio, for such are hitherto the results to which the classicists have been led; either to dress the heroes of heroic Greece in court garb of the times of Louis XIV., as Racine has done, or to clothe Christian knights and ladies of modern times in the Roman mantle, according to the models of Alfieri.

But, as we have said, Alfieri ought to have been the last of classics in Italy; and none of his successors who dares not or knows not how to open a new way for himself can have any chance of sending his name down to a remote posterity.

Neither is Niccolini any more felicitous in his delineation of Italian life, in his "Lodovico il Moro," or "Arnaldo da Brescia." The latter tragedy was, as usual, received with thundering applause on the stage, and, as usual also, it was *canonized*, as it were, by a thundering decree of suppression immediately issuing from the Grand Ducal police. Niccolini's performances have hitherto invariably been burying each other in oblivion. The cheers of an excited audience, generally elicited by political feelings, are by no means the test by which dramatic productions can secure the more calm approbation of criticism. Niccolini is deservedly a popular character in his native city. He has invariably been carried home in triumph after the performance of each of his dramas. Yet somehow, with the exception of "Antonio Foscarini," there is not any that can boast of being much more read than performed.

By a most unsuccessful adoption of romantic views, he has in his last works, especially in the "Arnaldo," crowded the stage not with persons only, but with whole nations. Every speech is crammed with historical allusions, which render the play unintelligible without the appendage of a vast volume of notes. The poet allows himself no flow, no

spontaneousness of diction. Every line, every phrase is hard, turgid, exaggerated.

It is only by the spirit that animates him that Niccolini secures our respect, and awakens our sympathy. He is no milk and water patriot. He is the only Italian writer that fearlessly tells his countrymen wholesome, if not palatable, truths. Nothing more withering than the tone of his upbraiding. Sometimes through the lips of a German Cæsar, sometimes through those of an English Pope, are the terrible lessons conveyed. Their slavery, he informs them, is only the result of their mean spirit of discord, of their degradation, of their arrant cowardice. "I wish," he says, through the organ of one of his heroes of the Sicilian Vespers, "I wish the clouds would draw upon Italy their dense curtain of gloom—wherefore this smile of heaven on a land that owes its woes to its baseness!"*

Invectives in this style are introduced with an unsparing hand. The poet's object is, very plainly, to lash his countrymen into madness; to rescue them through sheer consciousness of shame. No Italian can read "Arnaldo da Brescia," without groaning with rage. We have confidence in the efficacy of the remedy from the very strength and bitterness of its taste.

We shall dismiss the remaining dramatic authors of modern Italy, with only a few words. Some of them are following still in the footsteps of Alfieri; some have ventured on an imitation of the romantic style of *Oltremonti*, others write after the false *medio tutissimus* principle of Pellico and Niccolini. None of them has, however,

* "Io vorrei che stendesser le nubi
Sull' Italia un densissimo velo,
Perchè tanto sorriso di cielo
Sulla terra del vile dolor."

Giovanni da Procida.

reached any considerable degree of celebrity*, and we only subjoin the names of a few of them for the gratification of the curious in bibliography.

From the choice of subjects of these dramatic authors, it will be easily perceived that preference is given to modern, historical, chiefly national, subjects. Their desire to cling fast to historical truth, must needs keep their fancy under a painful constraint. In all subjects chosen from the annals of modern ages the poet's powers are apt to be cramped, and the work of imagination considerably injured by the contrast of glaring, positive fact.

This is, however, one of the many points at issue between the classists and romancists, on which we will not venture to pronounce—whether indeed poetry essentially delights in mystery and obscurity—whether subjects drawn from the formless memorials of a cloud-hidden antiquity have a stronger hold on our feelings than such as have received through the diligence of modern annalists a full daylight notoriety—whether nature is only to be surprised within the inmost recesses of fabulous tradition, or whether, by being laid bare before the artist, it may not offer better grounds for a faithful and spirited imitation—whether a drama is to be a grand *tableau* of ideal heads, or rather a set of well-drawn portraits?

But it is not in Italy alone, that the drama has reached its period of languor and decline. We know of no living

* "Buondelmonte," "Corso Donati," "Berengario Augusto," and "Cecilia di Baone," by Carlo Marenco da Ceva. Turin, 1840.

"Pier delle Vigne," by Briano. Turin, 1840.

"Il Conte Anguissola" and "Beatrice Tenda," by Felice Turotti. Milan, 1840.

"Luisa Strozzi," by Giacinto Battaglia. Milan, 1839.

"La Famiglia Lercari." Genoa, 1842.

"Lorenzino de Medici," by Giuseppe Revere. Milano, 1839.

"Il Duca Alessandro de Medici," by A. Ghiglioni.

"Beatrice Tenda," by Carlo Tedaldi Fores. 1827.

dramatist of renown who may be deemed worthy of occupying the stage vacated by Schiller and Goëthe. England and France have indeed every month a fresh supply of new tragedies, written in every style and on every subject. Every month the newspapers labour hard to raise some of Bulwer or Victor Hugo's new dramas to the stars. Yet a little while, however, and the astounding performance is no more heard of than the withered leaves of the last season. It is a literature of cast and mould, each book resembling its fellow, even as a penny all other pence. Inspiration comes at the poet's bidding, and the muse waits upon him with the punctuality of a faithful handmaid. Whereas poverty endears to the Italians even the scanty literature that they have left. There has scarcely appeared in Europe, during the last twenty years, a tragedy that has any chance of outliving the timid and frail, yet heart-moving and soul-subduing "Francesca da Rimini;" and that, because the heart in Italy still comes in for something in the poet's work, no less than in the sympathies of his audience.

Lyrical poetry in Italy numbered still, till very lately, a very ardent cultivator, amongst the most rigid followers of classicism, in the person of Giacomo Leopardi*. His patriotic soul knew no other utterance than the old-fashioned *Canzone Petrarchesca*. Five or six effusions in that style, the work of his whole life, illustrated by a vast mass of philology and erudition, have been read with almost superstitious veneration by the Italian youth, for the last twenty years. They are cold and stately, highly finished performances, with a great deal of common-place

* Giacomo Leopardi, born at Recanati, 1798. "Canzone all' Italia," Rome, 1818. "Ad Angelo Mai," an ode on his discovering the MS. of Cicero's "De Republica," 1833. "Canzoni," a collection of his songs, first published in Bologna, 1826. "Operette Morali," Milan, 1829. "Canti," a new collection, with additions, Florence, 1833. Died in Naples, 1837.

mantled by flowing grandiloquence, and an occasional touch of daring sublimity. They do not, in our opinion, belong to the present age: but by the side of Petrarch's strains on analogous subjects, or of Filicaia's high-sounding war songs, they would look to great advantage; they are specimens of what might be called monumental literature. We pass by them with awe and reverence; but the feelings they arouse in our bosom are any thing but lifelike and sunny. Leopardi, however, is or was one of the most popular authors in his own country. His patriotism, glowing with unabating zeal, in despite of the exhaustion of a careworn and sickly frame; his consistency, the disinterestedness with which he declined honourable and proficuous employment abroad, that his voice might be incessantly raised in the tone of exhortation and encouragement to his brethren at home; his endurance of bodily pain, poverty, and all its concomitant evils, secured in favour of his poetical efforts a homage, which was, perhaps, rather due to his personal character. Without exile or imprisonment, Leopardi is one of Italy's heroes and martyrs.

There is certainly more of Prometheus's spark in Berchet's "Romanze." Driven from his native Milan in the prime of his youth, this bard was brought into early acquaintance with foreign literature, and made aware that the beautiful does not essentially reside in the models of the past. He toned his harp somewhat after the manner of northern minstrelsy, and the effect was new and pleasing. His poetry, agreeably to Maroncelli's expression, who called him the Italian Tyrtæus, "like Alpine music," had power to produce home sickness in the poor exile, and to kindle the fire of patriotism in Italian bosoms at home *.

* "Romanze, di Giovanni Berchet," Londra, 1825. "Le Fantasie," 1827. The same author published also an Italian version of celebrated Spanish romances, &c. He is now living at Genoa.

His "Romanze," the most immediate expression of Italian nationality, during the first dolorous experiments of its violent awakening, were, without contradiction, the most romantic production of Romanticism. They have hitherto been regarded, only on account of their circumstantial importance, as war songs, when Italy was expected to prevail by strength of arms. None of the modern poets had better conceived the pining depression, the ardent impatience, under which the Italians were labouring; none to express the inveterate rancour long cherished in Italy, and especially in Lombardy, against the Austrian name. The spirit of the exiled bard roamed amidst the favourite haunts of his childhood. He descended into the privacy of afflicted mansions, he interrogated the tears of bereaved sisters and wives, and revealed their secret anguish to the sympathies of Europe.

Here, under the poplars of the Dora, in its most lonely recesses, is Clarina, the betrothed of an exile and his widow; here, when he started to join the standards of the insurrection of 1821, when she adorned the helmet of her warrior with the national colours, in the midst of her terrors she had still for him a word of encouragement; here, when all was lost, when she met him once more to exchange a last farewell, she had still for him a word of consolation and hope; here now she sits alone and deserted, and none has for her a word of sympathy or encouragement. There, a man of the north, a foreign visitor, hastening to breathe the air of sweet Italy, is accosted on the summit of the Alps by one of the hermits of Mount Cenis, who points out to him the vale of the Po lying at their feet, smiling like a garden, outspreading like an ocean. Before that bewildering sight, the venerable old man covers his face with both hands, and a tear steals from his eyes. Pressed by the stranger, he talks of his private chagrins; he tells of the sorrows of those hundred cities glittering on the plain; and, on the

threshold of Italy, the desire of Italy dies in the heart of the stranger. To the fair hills and vineyards, saddened by tears, to the fair cities, crowded with the victims of tyranny, he prefers the gloomy pines of his forests, the fogs and the dismal blast of the east wind of his own shores *.

Such is the poetry Italy was in need of; and while such verses were sung in England, or Egypt, or Barbary, or in any land that might offer the exile a shelter, the echo of millions of hearts answered at home; and those verses repeated, copied, smuggled, eluded all precautions, evaded all persecutions, until they appeared at last with open face, in full daylight, secure in the patronage of popular enthusiasm.

But, as if aware that his warlike strains would no longer be in unison with the peaceful revolution by which the destinies of his country are now being fulfilled, Berchet has long since hung up his harp, not on the "willows by

* . . . . "Non è lieta,
Non può stanza esser di giubilo,
Dove il pianto è al limitar.
Non è lieta, ma pensosa,
Non v' è plauso, ma silenzio,
Non v' è pace, ma terror.
Come il mar su cui si posa,
Sono immensi i guai d' Italia,
Inesausto è il suo dolor.
* * * *
Tal sull' Itala frontiera,
Dell' Italia il desiderio
All' estranio in sen morì;
Ai bei colli, ai bei vigneti,
Contristati dalle lagrime
Che i tiranni fan versar,
Ei preferse i tetri abeti,
L' ardue nebbie, ed i perpetui
Aquiloni del suo mar."

Il Romito del Cenisio.

the waters of Babylon," but on the orange groves along the Genoese shores. The new-fangled clemency that sprang up in the heart of Italian rulers, after the famous amnesty of Pius IX., enabled the bard, together with many other exiles, to revisit the haunts of his youth, and even to take up his residence under shelter of that "*Esecrato Carignano*," King Charles Albert of Sardinia, against whom the shafts of his poetic wrath were mainly directed.

His successor in public favour, as the Poet of the Times, was a less ambitious, but more versatile genius, the "Italian Beranger," Giusti. When we distinguish the only really living poet of Italy by an appellation which we hear frequently applied to him, we do not mean to do so in disparagement to his just claims as an original poet. Giusti may be a rival, but no imitator of the French songster. Some of the manner, the metre, the quaint burdens to the songs, undoubtedly, were suggested by the models of the popular printer-poet; but the quiet sarcasm, the raciness, the bold, laconic utterance of the Italian are essentially his own, they are the immediate result of the *arguteness* of a language wonderful in its manifoldedness, in the inexhaustibleness of its unsuspected resources.

For the last ten years the poems of Giusti have performed in Italy the office of "Punch," or "the Charivari;" and if the Italians are so far able to avail themselves of the latitude of the press which they have lately obtained, as to establish "Il Pasquino," or any other popular periodical work in the style of their own Anglicised *Pulcinella*, it is Giusti alone that should be entrusted with the editorship. Written in the secret of his closet, and strewn to the winds, like Sibylline lives, those songs "La Cronica dello Stivale," "Girella," and perhaps fifty more, travelled from mouth to mouth with astonishing speed; they were copied with unwearied diligence, stuck up like play-bills at the corners of the street, sent by post, or laid under the napkin at the breakfast table of the exalted personages they were in-

tended for, until they at last made their way into the world, by the means of a clandestine publication, under the quaint title "Poesie tratte da un testo a penna," and bearing the infallible date, "Italia,"—the accommodating fatherland, during the distress of her sons, being made the common receiver of all contraband goods.

The poetry of Giusti was as new to Italy as the peculiar position of the country itself. The Italian muse substitutes satire for heroics, even as Italian patriotism lays its hopes on moderate and conciliatory, rather than violent measures. Berchet taught his countrymen the language of sorrow and wrath, Giusti that of scorn and derision; the former preached a crusade against the oppressor of Italy; the latter is satisfied with raising a laugh,—a low, but deep, bitter, and withering laugh,—at their expense.

The Italians have at all times evinced the keenest sense of the ludicrous. *Pasquino* at Rome has done terrible execution both in ancient and modern times; too often the only weapon of a crushed people against overbearing despots, satire in Italy might be charged with ill-nature and scurrility, but never with lack of point and piquancy.

Giusti's humour is of the quietest. It never stoops to indecent contumely, never rises to fierce invective. It is raillery in a quick but subdued tone, a gentlemanly sneer, more, to say the truth, after the manner of French *persiflage*, than in the sanguinary tone of Italian pasquinade. The style is distinguished by nerve and laconism; by an adroit spontaneousness which is, however, the result of careful study.

Since the publication of Manzoni's hymns, Italian literature has sent forth nothing so fresh and vigorous as these political satires. They are the earliest manifestation of Italian revival; a flagrant proof of the dependence of literature on the ebb and flow of public spirit. They are the poetry of the age; the poetry of life.

Unfortunately neither prose nor verse can do justice to

similar performances in a foreign garb. The late specimens of translation from Giusti in one of the English Reviews, convey nothing but the meaning of the original composition. The words are there, and the sense also, but all inanimate, petrified. It is with Giusti as with all truly original poets. Thought and word are one and indivisible; without its quaint proverbial phraseology, its Tuscan slang, its jingling burden, and clinching rhyme, the poet's wit will sound vapid and trivial. The original itself is a sealed book to mere Italian learners. It contains the quintessence of all that is idiomatic in the language; and the language is much more vast and unfathomable than superficial students are apt to imagine.

It is from these considerations alone that we are deterred from any attempt at turning the latest of Giusti's performances into English. The title itself, "Il Re Tentenna," "King Waverer," or "King Shilly Shally," is not easily rendered. It is a friendly hit at Charles Albert's irresoluteness and tergiversation. It represents him as playing at see-saw with his subjects; swinging up and down in obedience to the impulse he receives from his two ministers, the good genius, Villamarina the patriot, and the evil demon, Solaro della Margherita the Austro-Jesuit. The king himself is portrayed as a mixture of craft and cowardice, giving in to the suggestions of his two opposite advisers, not from honest conviction, but as a matter of need or expediency; eternally oscillating between two fears, uneasiness on the part of his subjects; dread of his grasping neighbour; an instinctive horror of popular insubordination, a secret loathing for Austrian supremacy.

It is a masterly performance; and we doubt not it had its due effect in the proper quarter: the measures of reform which have lately been the subject of such wild and loud rejoicings at Turin and Genoa, were most probably determined by the laugh Giusti had contrived to get up at the royal shuffler's expense. Happy times are these for

Italy, when a song has power to influence the destinies of the country!

With the exception of Berchet and Giusti, Italian poetry since 1830 can hardly boast of any achievement beyond sterile imitation. Luigi Carrer, Tommaseo, Mamiani, and, perhaps, a score more who have attained a certain height of popularity at home, have no great titles to the attention of readers abroad; no chance of giving much trouble to readers in after ages. They are the men of "intolerable mediocrity;" and there are hundreds beneath them, at different degrees, whose pretensions are even more limited, whose fame is circumscribed within a narrow district, rooted, like a tree, to the insignificant spot where it grew.

On the whole, we confess it with regret, there is, perhaps, no country more favourable to servile imitation than Italy. For one gifted eagle soaring to heaven on the unwearied wing of genius, there are always a flock of geese flapping their dull feathers in a vain attempt to follow in its ethereal path. The great bane of Italian life—the lack of useful and honourable employment—turns to the cultivation of literature intellects shaped by nature for quite a different career. Whoever can afford to be idle, and has no taste for a life of dissipation or libertinism, must, in youth at least, be a poet—a rhymer and sonneteer we should say;—and is always sure to meet a swarm of silly birds of the same feather, happy to flock together, to join in one loud cackle with him.

Veneration for the masterpieces of happier generations is no less fatal to the development of original genius in the fine arts. Painting and sculpture never boasted of greater activity in Italy than they display at the present day. Never were schools of design better endowed than the Italian academies in every town or province: never greater encouragement held out to rising talent. The very materials and implements of his calling are freely supplied

to the beginner by those liberal institutions. The wonders of taste, both of Pagan and Christian civilisation, are within his reach. From the marbles to the naked figure, and from this again to the classic works of the great masters, he is made to toil and to plod. Long ecstatic contemplation begets idolatrous veneration. The youth at the academy have no eyes or taste of their own. They exhaust their energies in mere copies. They grow old, soul and body, in the endless drudgery of their complicate training. They acquire correct ideas of design—consummate skill as colourists; but they lose all power of creation. With a devotion to art which has nothing to envy the "Wedded Love" of the Caracci, they labour for years at their canvas. Every thing receives the highest finish at their hands. They work *con amore* and *per amore*. They look for no remuneration beyond self-approval. They all but starve in their *studios;* or provide for their sustenance by hasty sketches and portraits, for which a market is still to be found. The "great performance of their whole life" is not venal. All personal emolument or preferment is made subservient to the main object. If faith is to be found any where in Italy, it is in the artist's heart.

At last the "work" is produced. The exhibition-rooms are crowded to suffocation. Critics and amateurs in rapture. Town and country are proud of the achievement of their *valoroso concittadino*. What is it? Why, a Madonna after Correggio, or a Venus after Titian; a Sacra Famiglia after Rubens, or a Sibyl after Domenichino—always something after somebody. They are original pictures, nevertheless. See, the Madonna holds her divine infant on the right knee, not on the left. The Venus is in a supine, not a recumbent attitude. These trifles—it is grievous to say—too often constitute originality at an Italian academy. The copyist—unheard-of daring!—aims at modification and improvement! Reproduction, with slight variations, is dignified into invention.

The mind has no share in the work of Italian art. Out of a thousand works yearly exhibited at Florence or Rome, hardly three subjects are new. The native critics, it is true, are fain to attribute this barrenness to the narrow-mindedness of the Italian governments frowning upon every attempt at historical patriotic subjects. The truth is, however, that Italian artists too often cherish, and pride themselves in, their ignorance of all that is not immediately conducive to the material advancement of their art, and that they are too apt to reject all subjects for which they have not a precedent among the models of bygone ages, and all such as would compel them to substitute mediæval or modern costume for the naked figure or loose drapery of antiquity. All the beautiful in nature would seem, in their estimation, to be limited to this display of nudity; and although we flatter ourselves to be free from all bigoted squeamishness about the exposure of undraped forms—when properly clad in the hallowed modesty of poetical idealisation—yet we do believe the chief merit of a picture to reside in the delineation of the human face divine, and that mere flesh must be, at the utmost, considered of as secondary importance, as any other accessory of dress, furniture, or landscape.

Italian artists, however, think otherwise; and it is not without pain we see a man of such rare abilities as Spiridione Gambardella, perhaps the greatest colourist now living, so hopelessly a slave to the same prejudices.

Self-exiled from his country, in consequence of a generous though inordinate love of freedom; estranged from the great models of Italian art from his very earliest youth, Gambardella, altogether a self-taught genius, grew up in the worst possible school for an artist—in the United States. Up to the present moment he has seen but little of the old Italian masters, beyond what is to be found in private or public galleries in old and new England. As yet unknown to fame in this great Babylon of London, he

might, however, easily claim the palm of the greatest portrait painter, in a country where portraits constitute the main pride of the artist's skill.

He, however, aspires to the glory of an historical painter; and so far as mere execution can substantiate his claims, he may well be under no apprehension of rivals. His large picture, "The Reign of Queen Victoria," which appeared at the late exhibition in Westminster Hall, gave an idea of a style of colouring with which the untravelled English are unfamiliar. The crowds that daily invaded that noble Gothic building seemed to have no eyes but for the performance of the foreign artist with the long name. That picture did not, and it was a subject of universal surprise, receive any of the prizes; it was even slightingly spoken of by such critics as the "Athenæum" and "Family Herald." There was something astonishing in the work, notwithstanding: and we have little hesitation to assert, that it would have had the very first prize awarded to it, had Italian judges been appealed to for their sentence. But he laid his picture before a people who look for *rationalism* in art; who give the mind even an undue ascendancy over the senses; who judge of the music of a song from the words that accompany it; and pronounce on the excellences of a picture from the meaning it conveys.

Gambardella's allegory, it is but just to confess, spoke more to his own than to the beholder's understanding. Its material beauties were not, indeed, lost to the multitude; still a universal opinion prevailed that the unmatched abilities of the artist had been turned to little if any purpose.

Though it might be difficult to name an artist in Italy whose productions could bear any comparison with Gambardella's; though, as we have already hinted, this latter is self-taught and self-dependent, yet is he no bad specimen of the good and evil qualities of an Italian artist.

A minute attention to the most trifling details with utter disregard of the general effect of the whole—a consummate skill in the reproduction of all objects they set before them, and a blind partiality for some of these objects, chiefly for bare human forms and female beauty; a helpless ignorance and utter heedlessness of the importance, the loftiness, the holiness of their subject—in one word, a mere materialisation of art—such are the leading features of the artist's character in a country which has so long claimed preeminence in this branch of civilisation. It seems, therefore, very obvious that England and Italy are at the very antipodes in these matters. The English artist is an idealist; the Italian, a sensualist. The former thinks, but knows not how to paint: the latter paints without giving himself the trouble to think.

CHAPTER VII.

LITTA.

Italian History—Vastness of the subject—Historical Publications—Litta—Italian Aristocracy—Classic Aristocracy—Feudal Nobility—Burgher Aristocracy—Courtly Nobility.

THE barrenness of Italian literature since 1830 is owing, not so much to any absolute prostration of the public mind—not so much even to the vexatious trammels by which it has hitherto been environed, as to the fact that the attention of the most distinguished men has been called to a great work of national importance, and which can only be the result of the combined efforts of all the lovers of the country.

The Italians are writing their history.

Up to the late movements at Rome, in Tuscany and Piedmont, the noblest intellects seemed to have forsaken those arts which are called liberal, because they cannot flourish without being fostered by the element of liberty. Cesare Cantù, a poet of some reputation in Lombardy, has ventured on a new work on universal history; one of those undertakings that task a man's powers during all his lifetime. Niccolini, as we have seen, one of the greatest living tragedians, has also abandoned the drama for a very important work on the history of the house of Swabia; and Rosini, a successful novelist, has changed the lively style of Romantic narrative, for the more serious task of a history of painting.

Every where this preponderance of grave and useful pursuits over the works of imagination was observable in Italy. Under the weight of all this learned lumber the vein of spontaneous genius necessarily ran scanty and slow. The Italians had become determined Utilitarians in literature. It seemed as if the natural fecundity of that gifted land were for the third time exhausted, as it was evidently the case in the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, when national poetry and eloquence were either plunged into a deep sleep, or corrupted by extravagance and bombast, to give way, in the first instance, to the classical researches of Bracciolini and Valla; in the second, to the physical discoveries of the school of Galileo.

It seems as if, to every age of active and creative life, a period of comparative repose must necessarily ensue, to be consecrated to the toils of erudition, to prepare the soil on which, in more fortunate circumstances, a new vegetation is to germinate. Such an epoch of rest and transition Italy had reached in our days; and the efforts of the scholars of that country seemed rather directed to search into the monuments of the past, to collect materials for the future, than to provide for the wants of the present.

Our age is the age of history. We succeed to a generation whose object it was to war with the past; to carry on, in the name of liberty, the most illiberal and indiscriminating system of demolition. They thought that the evils of feudal and ecclesiastical usurpations could not be considered as fundamentally eradicated until the very records of those institutions were erased from the memory of men. It was a hasty and presumptuous age, that loved to tread on the relics of the past with a feeling akin to that of the ancient Tartars, who levelled all buildings with the ground, lest they should prove an incumbrance to the velocity of their steeds.

Such a state of violence could not fail to bring about a reaction in our days: in fact, men are beginning again to

study the institutions of our forefathers, and to derive important instructions from the very evils which we are most inclined to deplore.

The ephemeral duration of the specious systems of the reformers of the last age, is to be chiefly attributed to the unsparing sentence which they pronounced against every thing that belonged to the past. No era can be considered apart from the foregoing periods. Human progress, like every thing else, must obey the universal rule of continuity; and the better we know in what degree of the scale of civilisation we have been left by our fathers, the bolder will be our onward start, the wider and safer our strides.

The period of repose that followed the downfal of Napoleon has witnessed the unanimous efforts of all Europe for an accurate compilation of history. Italy, of all countries the most absolutely doomed to political and commercial inactivity, afforded the more leisure for historical inquiry. History was, as I have said, one of the main instruments on which the Italians relied for a revival of national spirit.

It is remarkable, that whilst history, as well as almost every thing else that is noble or beautiful in modern civilisation, either originated or was revived in Italy; whilst that country may justly boast of having produced the greatest number of excellent historians—there should be as yet no work answering the purpose of a general history of Italy.

Besides the political impediments, or party prejudices, commonly alleged as the great obstacle to the completion of such a work, the vastness and labour of the undertaking are alone sufficient to deter the most active and persevering mind; nor could a just idea of the extent of the subject be formed from considering similar works on the history of the other countries of Europe.

The annals of these last can always be referred to one determined epoch, and comprehended within one period: and though the natural course of events may have been re-

peatedly interrupted, and the national unity broken, still there is always a centre, a great metropolis, a dynasty, forming, as it were, the main *cordillera* from which all secondary chains can be easily traced, and on which they mainly depend. That political, literary, and scientific spirit of centralisation, by which all historical monuments are insensibly drawn to enrich the royal museums and archives of the capitals, enable the French and English historian to survey, at a glance, the materials for his narrative.

But the history of Italy is the history of many nations and states. With its head hidden among the clouds of antiquity, the history of the country, acting for many ages the principal part in a drama, in which other nations only played the episodes, is necessarily divided into several distinct periods, and each period into a number of subdivisions, offering but few general points of analytical survey.

Besides, our age has witnessed a revolution in history, no less than in every other branch of science and literature; and for this we are, in great part, indebted to the indefatigable activity and diligence of the Germans.

We have been taught that history is a thing apart from historical romance: that we must sacrifice even what is noble or beautiful on the altar of truth: that no assertion is to be admitted, however long cherished in popular tradition, flattering to national vanity, or akin to feelings of our nature, unless grounded upon such solid bases, and confirmed by such irrefragable documents, as sufficiently constitute the evidence, or at least the plausibility of its authenticity.

Truly this system of matter-of-fact research may be, and has already been, carried to an extreme; and, by a vain display of erudition, historical works have often been made to groan under the weight of unprofitable appendices, and the attention of the reader has been drawn into a labyrinth

of puerile discussions. An unlimited credit has too often been bestowed upon moth-eaten manuscripts; or too wide and vague an interpretation of fragmentary inscriptions has led to conclusions verging on absurdity. We have had occasion again and again to deplore the demolition of some of the specious fabrics of our forefathers, which had a stirring influence on our imagination; and we could never, for instance, cordially rejoice at the ingenuity of those writers who succeeded in ranking the exploits and existence of William Tell among the fictions of Helvetian mythology.

But it is, nevertheless, a fact, that no historian, however venerable his character, can any longer advance assertions merely upon personal responsibility. No historical essay is, in our days, expected to come to light without a supply of quotations and references from the texts of long-forgotten authors, reported with all their luxury of quaint orthography or obsolete language—without a display of ancient charters, edicts, letters, medals, and inscriptions—and without discriminately weighing and sifting all those different and often contradictory testimonies, from which may result the corroboration of the opinions started in the text.

We have already seen what zealous collectors and publishers of historical documents the Italians have been, especially in the age of Muratori. It would appear, that if any country in the world might be considered especially rich in historical monuments, and therefore entitled to repose from labour, that country is Italy.

The Italians are, however, far from considering their preparatory work as complete; and no sooner had the country recovered from the consequences of the French revolution than they resumed the work, and soon found that the field of discovery widened in proportion as their progress seemed more rapid.

It had been a subject of universal regret, that at the epoch of Muratori's gigantic undertakings the Piedmontese

archives were shut against him by the jealousy of the government, and that his collection remained imperfect so far as related to Western Italy.

The diligence of Piedmontese scholars, in our days, has laid open what the narrow-mindedness of the Dukes of Savoy had withdrawn from public curiosity; and the monuments of national history, published by a royal deputation during the last four years, have gone far to satisfy the most anxious demands of the learned*.

The Monumenta Historiæ Patriæ is a work in progress, and the labours of the Royal Deputation, composed of such men as Balbo, Saluzzo, Sclopis, and Cibrario, all illustrious for important historical achievements†, are daily bringing to light new treasures, furnishing materials for a long series of volumes. The encouragement the efforts of these scholars met with on the part of King Charles Albert was amongst the first symptoms that prince gave of his disposition to depart from the sanguinary line of policy which characterised the first years of his reign.

The "Monuments" consist of charters, dating as far back as the year 707; municipal laws, and edicts, and chronicles, for the most part inedited or unfamiliar to the generality of readers.

The importance of documents of this nature will be obvious to persons initiated in all the questions concerning the precedence of the municipal liberties of the different countries of Europe—a precedence which has been given at one time to some of the German towns, at another to French, English, or Castilian communities; whilst the Italians not only assert the priority of their Tuscan and Lombard republics, but even hold, that the Roman municipal institutions, to which modern civilisation is indebted

* "Historiæ Patriæ Monumenta, edita jussu Caroli Alberti." Turin, 1836–1839, &c.

† See, especially, the "Economia Politica del Medio Evo," by the Cavaliere Luigi Cibrario. Turin, 1839.

for the very first elements of social order, were never entirely abolished in some of their southern and eastern provinces, whence, by the force of example, they soon revived in the north and west, wherever the Lombard, Frankish, and German dominions gave way. Some of the most ancient charters of the Piedmontese collection go back to the beginning of the eighth century, whilst the most ancient body of municipal laws, in that part of the Peninsula, the *Statuto Consolare* of Genoa, bears the date of 1143.

The historical documents of Tuscany, Lombardy, and other provinces, relating to the middle ages, were already before the public, but the gleaning of what may have been left from the harvest of Muratori and his contemporaries, and the collection of monuments of a more recent date, is now engaging the attention of Italian scholars.

There exists in the Parisian libraries a vast number of Italian manuscripts, most of them of the highest historical importance, which, having, *per fas et nefas*, come into the possession of France, would be for ever lost to Italy, without the diligence of some distinguished Italians residing abroad.

The collections of such documents, brought into light by Professor Marsand, a native of Padua (1836–1838), and by Giuseppe Molini (1836)*, have made considerable additions to the historical materials already in possession of the public. They contain, chiefly, Latin, French, and Italian letters, political and commercial, treatises between Rome, France, and the different Italian states, and copies from autographs of popes, kings, and eminent men. We find there, amongst the most illustrious names, those of Andrea Doria, of the Marquis Trivulzio, of the Marquis of Marignano, and other heroes,

Che di vederli in me stesso m'esalto,

* Manuscrits Italiens, de la Bibliotèque Royale, et de celles de l'arsênal, Mazarine, et de Sainte Geneviève. Documenti di storia Italiana, copiati sugli originali autentici, e per lo più esistenti in Parigi.

and the insight which their correspondence gives of their life and character, the petty *tracasseries* of their domestic establishments, appearing, as they do, in all the peculiarities of their style of writing, have the advantage of giving us a minute and faithful picture of real life in bygone ages, such as the most elaborate history could hardly afford.

But above these, and above all other publications by which a few industrious Florentines have contributed to enrich the history of the country, we must place a collection of "Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti al Senato," of which several volumes have appeared since 1840. It is well known that, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the principal Italian families, who had taken part in the management of public affairs, enriched their family archives with large collections of state papers, accumulated during their administration at home, or in the course of their embassies abroad. This practice was more generally observed in Venice, where the patrician families held for a longer period the sovereignty of the state. The collections of manuscripts invariably attached to the library of every Venetian magnate, and which related for the most part to the affairs of the republic, were, to a great extent, dispersed on the general subversion of that ancient aristocracy in 1797; but a few of these private archives are still in existence, and are shown by the owners to their guests with a melancholy complacency,

"Col misero orgoglio d'un tempo che fu."

In the year 1296, it was ordered by a decree of the Great Council, that all the Venetian ambassadors should on their return read before the senate an account of their mission, which was afterwards to be deposited in the state-archives—a practice regularly observed until the last days of the republic. These papers, which "had gradually increased to a large library, furnishing the lover of modern

history with one of the richest treasures of authentic documents," after undergoing severe losses in the first heat of republican devastation during the French invasion, when manuscripts were wantonly scattered in every direction, and sold by the French soldiers for waste paper, shared at last the fate of the remaining archives, and travelled across the Alps to France and Germany, whence a great part of them have never returned.

All that remained of the memorials treasured up by the diligence of those provident patricians was, therefore, to be found either in the public libraries of Paris or Vienna, or in some of the private museums and archives of the Italian nobility. The first attempt at a revival of these historical monuments seems to have been made by Luigi Cibrario, under whose direction appeared at Turin, in 1830, the Reports on the State of Savoy in the years 1574, 1670, and 1743, as given by the Venetian ambassadors, Molini, Bellegno, and Foscarini, with the editor's notes and illustrations. Five years later, 1835-36, Professor Leopold Ranke, among the documents with which he has enriched his History of the Popes, published a vast number of these Venetian Reports, which he had the merit of bringing to light, most of them drawn from the public archives of Vienna, and some from the family repositories of the Roman aristocracy. Again, in 1838, Niccolò Tommaseo, then an exile in France, extracted from the Parisian royal libraries, and published by the order, or at least the permission, of Louis Philippe, the *Rélations des Ambassadeurs Vénitiens sur les affaires de France au XVIme siècle, recueillies et traduites*, etc., in two volumes quarto.

These partial publications stimulated the ardour of the Marquis Gino Capponi, who now resolved to carry into execution the idea which he had long conceived, of presenting his country with an accurate edition of all that was yet to be found of that widely scattered collection. Such an undertaking could not fail to find ready cooperators among

the Florentine nobility; and the names of those who aided it by their advice or money were printed in front of each volume, as a due mark of acknowledgment. The direction and care of the work was intrusted to Eugenio Alberi, of Bologna.

The *Relazioni Venete*, now publishing at Florence, are mostly drawn from the Magliabechiana and Riccardiana libraries, or from the Archivio Mediceo of that city, which are said by the editor to contain immense treasures of these interesting materials. The Society has also opened an extensive correspondence with many distinguished scholars in Turin and Rome, and with Italians residing in Paris, in Vienna, Berlin, and Gotha. So that, including all that has been supplied from private collections, and what still remains in the archives of St. Mark, reasonable hopes are entertained that the edition will prove as complete as possible in the present state of things. So long a task was it, and so many different means had to be resorted to, in order to repair the work of French destructiveness.

The *Relazioni Venete*, if carried to the extent originally contemplated, will surpass in importance almost every historical work on the political events of the last three centuries. The spirit of enterprise and adventure which, from the days of Polo and Zeni, distinguished the Venetian diplomatists, and their peculiar capacity for inquiry and observation—the mystery and jealousy which involved the political transactions of the Venetian senate at home and abroad—that indefinable mixture of dread and love which bound every citizen, patrician, and representative, to a central, inscrutable, and iron will—that wary and selfish, but firm and unswerving system of impassive neutrality—that spirit of toleration and impartiality which the republic religiously observed in all political and theological dissensions, which sheltered Fra Paolo, Galileo, and a hundred victims of persecution, from the open vengeance of their enemies—the unparalleled sagacity of those able negotia-

tors who laid the foundations of modern diplomacy, and by whose constant exertion and vigilance the queen of the Adriatic sat calm and serene on her watery throne, watching the vicissitudes that convulsed the main land—all these cannot fail to inspire us with a conviction, that the ocular testimony of the Venetian ambassadors is the work of men who neither dared to deceive, nor could be easily imposed upon.

The ardour of the Italians for historical research is easily communicated to the most generous among the foreigners established among them. Dr. Gaye, a distinguished German, has laid Italy under the greatest obligation by his "Carteggio Inedito d'Artisti," a work terminated in 1841, after the editor's death. The documents published in this collection go back to the year 1326. Besides papers from the celebrated founders of modern art, we have official and confidential letters from the most influential personages, such as Rienzi, the Este, Medici, Sforza, Bembo, Varchi, Giovio, Pietro Aretino, &c. These memorials of the fine arts, therefore, equally constitute an essential part of the history of Italy and its literature.

Besides these works, resulting from the efforts of private persons or associations, every province, every insignificant town, has, within the course of the last ten years, produced its annals; and, as every modern work of that nature is the summary of all historical documents that each city or district can yield, all bring their local tribute to be added to the great mass of national historical erudition.

Such partial performances, however, can hardly be compared to efforts of a more daring nature, the greatest number of which are now in course of publication, and which are intended to condense the quantity of materials already known, and render them generally accessible to readers.

It must be confessed that a country in which, twenty or thirty years ago, the Marquis Rovalli printed his splendid History of Como, and disposed of only eighty-three copies

of it; and Pietro Verri sold no more than one copy of his History of Milan, and in which now so many thousand volumes of dry historical erudition are yearly printed and sold—is not a country to be despaired of; nor can we look without sympathy and admiration on the efforts of a nation, of all others in the world, except the Jews, the most divided and scattered, so unanimously cooperating in that one object of studying their history, as if, by dwelling on the glorious reminiscences of the past, they sought a refuge against the melancholy feeling of their present dejection.

Meanwhile, as we have said, in the midst of such vast means, the man has not yet arisen to give order and life to that formless and ponderous mass of heterogeneous materials, and a general history of Italy still remains to be written.

The earliest attempts ever made with any degree of success to answer that purpose, were the "Annali d' Italia" of Muratori, the "Rivoluzioni d' Italia," by Carlo Denina, the "Storia d' Italia Antica e Moderna," by Luigi Bossi, and the three volumes of Botta, entitled, "Histoire des Peuples d' Italie."

More recent essays on the same subjects have been made by Cesare Balbo, at Turin, and Carlo Troya, at Naples. But all these works are either works of erudition, and hardly to be numbered among the writings on philosophical history, or they do not display that wide power of genius, that eagle eye, which embraces, at one glance, an immensity of objects, and presents them in their mutual relations with that proportion which makes even of history an edifice obedient to the laws of architecture.

Truly it would seem that the Italians apply themselves to the compilation of their history, as ancient artists raised their architectural monuments for the amazement of posterity. Muratori, like Bramante or Arnolfo di Lapo, gave the first model, and planned the foundation of a mighty edifice: each successive generation added its tribute of im-

portant materials: ambitious artists brought forward their abortive designs: summers and winters revolved upon the unroofed aisles. But the day is yet to come, when the work shall feel the impulse of the hand of a Brunelleschi, or Michael Angelo; when it shall be said, as of the Roman and Florentine domes, "Time has done, but time shall not undo."

The Italians, however, up to the death of Gregory XVI., were labouring under the greatest disadvantages. Even works of plodding erudition, though they afforded the means of a more practicable evasion, were not unfrequently thwarted by the odious tyranny of the police. The editor of the ill-fated "Antologia di Firenze" had been these ten years applying in vain for permission to publish a "*Biblioteca Storica*," in the shape of a monthly journal, intended to constitute a periodical register of every discovery connected with historical subjects. The history of the house of Swabia, by Niccolini, and the history of the times of the Tuscan reformer, Peter Leopold, which the Marquis Gino Capponi has completed in the midst of harassing difficulties, were still awaiting an *imprimatur*, which will now, perhaps, no longer be withheld.

This took place under the auspices of the "mild and benignant" Duke of Tuscany; for I should consider it as superfluous to state that Botta's works were never allowed to appear at Milan; that Leoni's translation of so innocuous a book as Hallam's "Middle Ages" was only permitted to be published at Lugano, in Switzerland; that the Sardinian government had recently banished the author of a work on the Statistics of the Commerce of Genoa, &c.

But if no work of transcendent merit has as yet been completed, in any manner answering the purpose of a general history of Italy, there is no lack of interesting essays written in illustration of different periods or separate districts—or of philosophical views of the state of society, of the laws and constitution of all and each of

the states. No sufficient praise can be given, for instance to the works of Micali, "L'Italia avanti ai Romani," and "Storia degli antichi Popoli Italiani,"—to the "Vespro Siciliano," by Michele Amari; nor have the endeavours of Cesare Cantù, after an Historical Cyclopædia, been unrequited by the unanimous applause of his countrymen. The most interesting of all historical publications in Italy, nevertheless, from the immense labour it cost, from the vastness and importance of its subject, from the skill, industry, and perseverance with which it is conducted, is the work on the "Celebrated Italian Families," by Litta*.

"Nobility," observed a very clever mathematician of our acquaintance, who, by a gift analogous to Midas's, was apt to turn every thing to cyphers—"nobility is like the *zero* in arithmetic; it is of no value in itself, yet placed by the right side of other figures, it has power to multiply their quantities by ten, hundred, and thousand folds."

The pompous appellations of *Conte*, *Principe*, *Duca*, &c. in Italy generally mean nothing; sometimes even less than nothing. The abolition of the rights of primogeniture, the equi-division of property without regard to age or sex, in almost all the Italian states, and, above all, the indiscriminating prodigality of orders and diplomas of every description by petty princes who thereby thought to add lustre and importance to their faded courts, and to enlist the vanity of their most influential subjects in the cause of their tottering thrones, have rendered such dignities so very easily accessible, so common and cheap, that it is by no means unfrequent to find in that country men really noble by birth, talents, and fortune, as anxious to wave their undisputed honours as one of the English

* Famiglie Celebri d'Italia, del Conte Pompeo Litta, Milan, 1819–1847. 8 vols. folio.

upstarts would be to display his newly gilded coronet and newly painted escutcheon.

Hence the Conte Pompeo Litta of Milan, when undertaking to compile what might not inappropriately be called an Italian peerage on a gigantic scale, took good care to call his work by the name of "Famiglie Celebri," not "Famiglie Nobili d'Italia," being well aware that no aristocratic distinctions in Italy can receive the sanction of public opinion, except such as are grounded on historical reminiscences, that no princely house can lay any claims to really illustrious descent, except those whose genealogy is written in the pages of national annals.

The publication of Count Litta's work began in 1819. More than eight large folios have been successively printed in the course of the last twenty-six years; the author himself is said to have lavished his vast fortune in collecting ample materials and in embellishing his volumes with most splendid illustrations of sepulchral monuments, ancestral portraits and pictures, medals, escutcheons, topographical maps of the domains of each family, and their manor houses and castles, the whole drawn up with all the exquisite neatness of Italian art, of which Milan is now the metropolis; the assistance of a vast number of *literati*, artists and antiquaries has not been wanting; and still not only is the work as yet very far from drawing to its close, but, such is the wide range of its subject, that it is more than doubtful whether the well-deserving compiler himself will ever live to see the end of an enterprise to which he alone at first dedicated himself, but in the continuation of which the noblest feelings of national pride are now powerfully interested.

In order to conceive an adequate idea of the vastness of such an undertaking, it must be remembered that what is now rather abstractedly called Italy is the assemblage of small and insignificant states, each of which—nay every

fragment of which—played a prominent part in the infancy of modern European civilisation, each of which had a separate, independent, and not always ephemeral existence, whose historical records are pregnant with achievements securing immortality to almost numberless names, whose archives teem with documents asserting the indisputable claims of almost innumerable families to the honours bequeathed to them by forefathers illustrious in arms, in letters, in arts.

As early as the year 1297, at the epoch of the closing of the great Council at Venice, that city boasted no less than four hundred and eighty patrician families. The members of each of those families had but too frequent opportunities of adding to the splendour of their houses by their strenuous demeanour during the ruthless struggles of their country against its rival Genoa, during the unequal contests against the Carrara, Visconti, and Sforza, and the colossal powers of the formidable league of Cambrai, and ever since, in the Turkish wars of Cyprus, Morea, and Candia, down to the extinction of their illustrious republic. To enumerate the noble houses from which the warriors sprung that fell at Curzola or Chioggia, at Agnadello, Padua, or Ravenna, at Lepanto, Famagosta, or Corinth, at almost every battle in the Mediterranean from the Crusades down to the French revolution—and the wary yet unswerving statesmen who piloted the fragile vessel of that amphibious government in the midst of the envy and rapacity of no less unprincipled than powerful neighbours, and the diplomatists who laid the rudiments of that treacherous but salutary science of lying that has spared Europe torrents of bloodshed—to name, in short, not only the titled but the historically noble families whose descendants still linger amidst the desolation of that tottering beaver-city alone, would prove as arduous a task as to compile the peerage of any of the great European monarchies.

An equal, if not a larger, number of heroic names are to be read in the pages of the "Libro d'Oro" at Genoa. Two hundred patrician families, all belonging to the Ghibeline faction alone, were registered at Milan by the warlike archbishop Otho Visconti, who had driven as many of the Guelph party into exile at the close of the popular convulsions of 1277; neither is the burgher aristocracy of Florence, Pisa, and Siena, nor the feudal nobility of the two Sicilies and Sardinia, nor the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the patrimony of St. Peter, nor the courtly and country gentry of every petty town in Piedmont, Romagna, and Lombardy, less multitudinous; nor are their pretensions to purity of blood, to historical traditions, and very frequently to territorial sovereignty, less loud, less ambitious, or less satisfactorily demonstrated.

Placed by the side of the aristocracy of Italy, the nobility of every other country of Europe sinks into comparative insignificance. Not that, with the exception of Venice, Lucca, and Genoa, it either ever received any constitutional organisation, or ever exercised any permanent influence as a body; but because the divisions of the country, and its frequent political vicissitudes, had the effect of calling forth the energies of a greater number of individuals, whose share of public events reflected on their descendants a lustre that no lapse of time could ever eclipse.

Certainly when we look into the volumes of the "Biographie Universelle," a work edited in France, and entirely after French views, where we are almost sure to meet an Italian at every third name; where, amongst men of all races and colours, we see no less than eighteen or twenty that bore the name of Colonna, and as many of the Doria and Dandolo, Strozzi, Spinola and Foscari, not to speak of Este, Visconti, and Medici, we wonder whether a diploma of nobility might not be at once indiscriminately bestowed on the whole of the Italian nation, and we expect to meet

every lazzarone wearing a chieftain's plume on his pointed cap—every labourer painting a mitre or a coronet on his plough.

Of this vast farrago of celebrated families between eighty and ninety only have as yet found a niche in Count Litta's Grand National Gallery. These are not all among the most conspicuous: on the contrary, many of them, such as the Arcimboldi of Milan, Cavaniglia of Naples, Martelli of Florence, &c.—with reverence be it spoken—might easily be lost among the crowd; one table is often sufficient to give their genealogy from Alpha to Omega; and with the exception of a stray bishop or cardinal, of some Arcadian poet or court chamberlain, on many of their members might be written the summary epitaph—

"Lelio è sepolto quì
Nacque, visse e morì."

But when we come to those big names which Fame has trumpeted far and wide—to those families, to the biographies of whose members the history of their age and country, the progress of literature, science, and art, have become, as it were, episodical, then, notwithstanding the author's admirable sobriety and conciseness, and the printer's industrious economy, every branch of the genealogical tree is bent with the weight of the fruit it bears; column follows after column in unwearied succession, and the tables swell to a large atlas in folio. The work has as yet assumed no other than the alphabetical order. It may be questioned, however, whether the publication might not have been susceptible of a more philosophical arrangement, and whether, were it ever brought to a close, it might not then be practicable to give the work something like chronological order and system.

The aristocracy of Italy, in accordance with its original derivation, might, we think, be divided into four distinct classes, of which the first might be designated by the ap-

pellation of ancient patrician or classical aristocracy; the second might be called feudal or castellated nobility; the third might be formed of the burgher aristocracy, and to the last might belong the courtly or modern titled nobility. We do not, of course, pretend that in this, any more than in any other arbitrary classification, every individual family may be sure to find its proper place, nor that each division may not be susceptible of further distinctions and definitions. But the advantage of starting from an orderly principle will be obvious ere we are far advanced on the subject.

The first class would comprehend those that Count Litta, no less than the Italians in general, emphatically call "famiglie antiche," houses that claim their origin from ancient Roman antiquity—every thing connected with events posterior to the downfal of the Roman empire being in that classical land invariably designated as modern—and which, for the better intelligence of Transalpine readers, we would call "classical families."

The claims of any of the Italian families to Roman patrician descent may possibly be grounded on doubtful conjectures, may peradventure rest on universally cherished traditions; but, never, we believe, on well-determined genealogical evidence. That the invasions of the northern races did not overrun the whole country, that all the natives were not utterly destroyed, even though sadly dispersed and sifted, no man is unwilling to admit; but it is also natural to presume that

> "Siccome il folgore non cade
> In basso pian ma su l' eccelse cime,"

even so the merciless sword of the invader must have aimed its strokes against the loftiest heads, and the hand of desolation have weighed harder against the turreted halls of the luxurious patrician than against the humble abode of the unresisting crowd.

From the Alps to the Tiber every thing that stood

was levelled with the ground, and though the Eternal City itself contrived to purchase a precarious and ignominious security at the expense of the provinces, still the final day came for the metropolis itself, and then no shelter was to be found but among the rocks and banks of the Adriatic, or far on the shores of the Bosphorus.

Still some, even of the most conspicuous families, may have escaped unscathed during the ravages of that tempestuous era. A few stray castles may have been suffered to stand on the Apennine, either overlooked by the hurried conqueror, or by him deemed too arduous or too worthless a prey. A few houses may have been preserved till the day when victors and conquered came to a compromise, and rested at leisure, if not at peace, from their work of destruction; and these are to be generally recognised by the circumstance of their following the Roman instead of the Lombard or Salic law; it having been enacted in that chaos of civil and political institutions, that every family should be ruled according to the statutes of the nation to which it belonged. That several of these families may have been spared to put forward their claims in less inauspicious ages, we have almost a moral certainty. It is only the means of historically demonstrating the validity of those claims that is wanting, and in such lack of positive authentic testimonials, their pretensions must depend on the courtesy or credulity of their contemporaries.

It is, nevertheless, highly amusing to hear how far heraldic ingenuity and antiquarian research have succeeded in supplying the want of historical authority. Among the houses that go farther back into the past, a few are to be found in Rome or Florence, but a still greater number at Venice.

Human ambition, for instance, can aspire to no loftier origin than what befell the Massimi at Rome. Every school-boy is well acquainted with their history. As early as the year of Rome 275, B.C. 478, three hundred and six

of their ancestors all belonging to the patrician order, and known in Rome as the Fabian *Gens*, followed by about 4000 of their clients, were cut to pieces by the Vejentes, against whom they had volunteered to wage war alone in the name of the republic. Of that numerous progeny one only survived; a child, who, on account of his tender age, had been left at home. A descendant of that only survivor was destined two hundred and forty two years later to check the Carthaginian invader in the height of his prosperous career. This was Fabius *Maximus*; and it is his latest posterity that are said to be still living at Rome and elsewhere, bearing on their armorial shield the "cunctando restituit" of that no less discreet than valorous dictator.

"There is a tradition," observes Count Litta at the head of the first columns consecrated to that family, "that the present *Massimi* are derived from the ancient stock of this name, so illustrious in the annals of the Roman commonwealth. It might be doubted, however, whether it is to the Valerii or to the Fabii that they trace their origin, for both these houses and several others through adoption rejoiced in the appellation of Maximus. There exists a famous inscription in Rome, which is considered as the most ancient among the heraldic monuments of that town, formerly in the pavement of the church of *St. Bonifacio* and *Alessio*, on the Aventine, now in the cloisters of the adjoining monastery, which was intended as a tombstone of a certain *Maximus*, who is said to have lived in the tenth century, and sprung from a race of heroes."

The last Maximus mentioned in ancient history is said to be a Roman senator, so called, who was slain during the storming of the city by the barbarians of Totila, in the year of our era 552. From that epoch the name of Maximus is lost in the darkness of time, to be revived only four and a half centuries later, in the year 1012, the date of the above-mentioned inscription, preserved, as it were, in the Aventine Monastery only to prove the survival of the

house by the identity of name. *Et voilà comme on fait le blason.*

Count Litta, who, by the way, is no fanatic in these heraldic matters, concludes by stating, that, as far as popular reverence has power to sanction similar traditions, few genealogies can be more satisfactorily authenticated than that of the Principi Massimi, it never having been matter of question in Rome that what now runs in their veins is the identical cold blood of that good Fabius Maximus Dictator, against whose wadded shield the spear of the fiery African was blunted and deadened. One may be curious, of course, to see how a race whose source was thus hidden in Roman, or may be in Trojan mythology, would demean themselves during so long a series of generations.

From the epoch of that tell-tale inscription, all along the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, the Massimi seemed to have passed away in silence and obscurity, their names being occasionally met with in ancient inscriptions or other documents, as lords of castles, founders of convents or hospitals, &c., &c., only as it were to assure us that the old stock was still living and prospering, leaving us at a loss to guess for what purpose it might please Providence to keep it alive. The lustre of that family must, to a considerable extent, have been eclipsed by the ascendancy of the rival houses of Colonna and Orsini, though these last may be said to be mere upstarts placed by the side of the Massimi, both these houses being generally reputed of foreign or barbarian descent. In 1347 we find the Massimi involved in the calamities of the tribunitial revolution of Rienzi. Late in the following century they had the glory of granting an hospitable reception to Sweynheim and Pannartz, the two worthy Germans who introduced the art of printing into Italy, and whose very first works were published in 1467, "in ædibus de Maximis," the palace of their patron, Pietro Massimo, at

Rome. The Massimi lived then already in a princely style, and had given their country not a few warriors, statesmen, and senators. Their palaces, for one of which Michael Angelo gave the design, were tenanted by one hundred and fifty servants, and their names stand prominent among the promoters of art. The family is still extant, several branches having spread over other parts of Italy, and one even beyond the Alps in Carinthia.

Equal pretensions to ancient Roman descent, most probably grounded on analogous conjectures, are perhaps to be found at Rome, though, as early as in the days of Petrarch, that eminently classical poet complained that the good Roman blood was fast disappearing. Of these were the Crescenzi, Savelli, and among others the Frangipane, whose claims to the consideration of their countrymen were at least founded on better titles than is generally the case with the *Flay-neighbours* (Pela-Vicino or Pallavicino), and the *Evil-thorns* (Mali-spini) of the feudal nobility; their name having arisen from the liberality with which they came forward in days of distress and famine, and *broke* their *bread* with the poor.

These families, of which the greatest number was crushed by the oppressive power of the Colonna, have not yet come out in Count Litta's catalogue, unless we except the Cesarini and Cesi, whose names in the middle ages appear comparatively unimportant. The Cesarini number a few Cardinals, or Legates; the boast of the Cesi is the amiable and unfortunate Federico Cesi, the same who, in his eighteenth year, 1603, founded in Rome the Academy dei Lincei, and was the firmest supporter of Galileo, and whose discoveries in natural history raised his name so high among the precursors of Linnæus. Persecuted by the Roman priesthood, at war with his own family, on account of his scientific labours, he died broken-hearted in 1630.

Classical families are likewise still supposed to exist at

Florence, where, according to Malespini, the earliest historian of the republic, there flourished in his own times (before 1281) not a few descendants of the ancient Roman colonists, to whom the lovely city of Flora owes its foundation. Dante is well known to have belonged to one of them, though many of the poets and biographers incline to think that the Elisei proceeded from the Frangipane, and only migrated from Rome to Florence during the middle ages. Whatever may be the case, Dante himself has frequent allusions to his ancestry; and, though invariably modest and shy in all that personally concerns him, yet seems plainly to intimate his belief in his classical descent. The name of the Elisei occurs for the first time in 1019, when, at the epoch of the solemn entrance of the German Henry II. into Florence, one of that family was among the number of distinguished personages deputed by the city to greet and escort the emperor. Dante's regular pedigree, however, only ascends to that warlike ancestor of his, by name Cacciaguida, whom he meets in his *Paradise*, and who is made to predict to the poet the vicissitudes of his life. This hero was knighted by the emperor Conrad III., whom he followed to the second crusade, and lost his life in Palestine, in 1147. From Cacciaguida's wife, a Ferrarese lady, they derived the name of Aldighieri or Alighieri, which remained to the family instead of the primitive Elisei, down to its final extinction. The poet himself was Cacciaguida's great-great-grandson in a direct line, and his family continued at Florence till the year 1558, the epoch of the death of Francesco, the last of his male descendants in the sixth generation.

Still by far the greatest number of Roman patricians who did not perish in those frequent barbaric invasions, must either have repaired to the Italian sea-ports, such as Venice, Ravenna, Bari, and a few other towns garrisoned by Greeks from Constantinople, or migrated to that seat itself of the Eastern empire. Venice alone is well known,

in all times, to have withstood every successive assault; and there is not the slightest doubt, but that all the best families of Cisalpine Gaul, Istria, Dalmatia, &c., especially during the terror and desolation of the inroads of Attila in 452, sought their refuge among the glorious lagoons. The different petty colonies of the Venetian islands were independently governed by their tribunes till the year 697, when twelve of the most conspicuous citizens met in a single assembly at Heraclea, and elected Paolo Lucio Anafesto as the first doge or duke of maritime Venetia. Venice itself was only built in 809, and in the same year became the capital of the republic.

Three or four of the families, whose ancestors were mentioned among the twelve electors of the first doge, are already registered in Count Litta's great catalogue, and that important transaction seems to constitute the earliest mark of aristocratic distinction at Venice. Of these the Orseolo and Candiano, so renowned in the primeval annals of the Republic, were soon swamped in its political storms and became extinct; but the names of the Erizzo, Tiepolo, and others equally immortal, are still in existence.

None of the Venetian families deserve greater attention than the Giustiniani. It dates from the very remotest epochs, and it has been perpetuated to the present age both in Venice and elsewhere. The Giustiniani are said to have been driven from Constantinople, where their ancestors had borne the imperial diadem, (probably descending from their illustrious namesake, the wise legislator of antiquity,) in consequence of one of those frequent courtly factions that almost at every generation dyed with new tints the purple of the Eastern Empire. At first they are said to have sought a refuge in Istria, where they built Justinopolis, afterwards Capo d'Istria, and hence emigrated to the Venetian lagoons. One of their name is mentioned among the tribunes as early as 756; but, in the year 1170,

the whole of their numerous family, actuated by hereditary rancour, embarked in a fatal expedition against Alexius Comnenus, in which plague, famine, and treason conspired against the fortunes of Venice. With many thousand other combatants, all the Giustiniani found their death in the east; and that would have been the end of them for ever, had it not been for a pious monk, by name Nicolò, who had been left alone in the silence of his monastery at home. The Venetians, grieved at the impending extinction of so illustrious a name, sent an express embassy to the pope to obtain the good monk's release from his vows —drove him from the solitude of his cell, supplied him with a wife among the noble brides of Venice, and bade him provide against what they unanimously considered as a national calamity. The holy Nicolò, with a rare self-denial, took the youthful bride to his bosom, consented to become a husband and a father for the sake of public welfare; and after six years, having given sufficient proofs of his devotedness to the interest of the commonwealth, withdrew himself, and persuaded his wife to repair to the cloisters, where they both closed their life in odour of sanctity, and received the honours of pontifical canonisation.

The seed of the blessed Nicolò proved fruitful even beyond the ordinary measure of the human races, and spread with all the vigour of patriarchal multiplication. No less than fifty different houses of the Giustiniani contemporaneously flourished in the halcyon days of the republic; no less than 200 senators of their name sat, or at least had right to sit, at once in the great council, which, as it is well known, never in its best days numbered more than 2000 members. Scarcely a battle was ever fought—scarcely a vital measure adopted—scarcely a legation sent to any foreign court, in which one, at least, of the Giustiniani had not a principal share. Their pedigree is almost equivalent to another version of the history of Venice. Among so

great a number, it must be expected some reflected no great credit on the family escutcheon. But they can boast of, perhaps, a greater number of really good and useful citizens—of warriors, statesmen, and diplomatists—of *procuratori*, *oratori*, and *provveditori*—of authors, historians, and bishops—to say nothing of two saints and a doge—than any of the proudest houses in Venice.

Out of the above-mentioned fifty different branches of this house, forty were extinct before the beginning of the eighteenth century; but some of the Giustiniani were still high in dignity when the republic came into collision with Bonaparte, in 1797. One of them is well known to have firmly protested against, and bravely withstood all the vengeful fury of, the rapacious invader; but others, on the contrary, hastened with their cowardice the final hour of the republic, and crowded around the new Austrian rulers with time-serving abjectness.

It is melancholy, after following the genealogy of many of these brave Venetian races throughout their many branches, to hear to what degree of misery and destitution most of them are now reduced. "To doubt of the authentic descent of the Tiepolo from Roman patrician descent, is to offer an insult which every Venetian resents as personal." The Erizzo were invariably to be found at the head of their country's fleets against the Ottoman power. The Corraro, Foscari, and a hundred others, for centuries illustrated its name at home and abroad.

Yet how many of the branches of these families end with the following paragraphs:—

"Girolamo (Tiepolo) was supported by government by the aid of secret subventions."

"Federico (Foscari), born very rich, died very poor. The immense palace of his family, so famous once both for its magnificence and for the hospitality that so many foreign sovereigns met with within its walls whilst visitors at Venice, is now abandoned and tottering."

And at the close of another branch:—

"Francesco, *velite* in the Italian guard, died in fight at the close of the Russian campaign, in 1813. The last glory of the house of Foscari."

And again:—

"Filippo, body-guard in the Italian kingdom, then a lieutenant in the fourth regiment of foot. At the fall of Napoleon he refused to enter the Austrian service; and now exercises the comic art on the stage."

"Domenico, an actor on the Italian stage."

"Marianna, married to a coachmaker in Pordenone."

"Luigia, lives in Dunkirk, married to one Bowden, or Smallwood," &c.

And can we believe all this? The last heir of the "Two Foscari," now perhaps acting at the *Fenice* the part that the great doge, his progenitor, played in the Council Hall of the Republic! The daughters of Venice, for whose hands royal lovers were once known to sue; an alliance with whom turned the heads of continental noblemen, now given to a tradesman or to some one whose very name is below our notice.

Woe to the children of Venice who survive the fate of their country! Others, indeed, have purchased a precarious subsistence by an ignominious subservience to Austria, and such honours as the cabinet of Vienna had power to bestow were lavished on their names: but who that could die a Venetian patrician would live an Austrian nobleman?

Happily, death is busy to efface from the world these living testimonies of fortune's sad frolics, and the day is, perhaps, not far distant when ruins and tombstones shall be all that remain of the aristocracy of Venice.

Still the great houses of Dandolo and Zeno, Pisani, Contarini, and Pesaro, Gradenigo, Mocenigo, Loredano, and a greater number than our page could contain, are yet a desideratum in Litta's work. Venice alone is likely to give him employment for all his lifetime, every one of the

above-mentioned names compelling him to a new rhapsody of Italian history, from the fall of Rome to the last day of Venice. Of Genoa, also, scarcely one family has, as yet, engaged our author's attention; and yet as the ruggedness of the Ligurian mountains, and the fierce temper of their inhabitants, offered a more permanent resistance against northern invasions, the Genoese boast, not perhaps without reason, that the ancient blood of their patricians has passed more uncontaminated across the storms of the dark ages than that of any other district on the Italian mainland. The proofs of their ancient classical derivation, however, are still more vague and conjectural than those on which rest the claims of Venetians and Romans; the annals of Genoa ascending no higher than the tenth or eleventh centuries, in which epochs all repositories of private or public documents were repeatedly destroyed by the frequent onsets of the Saracens. All that can be positively stated on that subject is, that long before the year 1100, Genoa was swayed by four ancient, noble, powerful families, the Doria and Spinola, Grimaldi and Fiesco; and as these names rose to celebrity long before any other, so have they in after ages stood first and foremost in all national vicissitudes. The aristocratic houses of Genoa have been preserved from generation to generation with a more uninterrupted continuance, and their representatives live now in a state of greater affluence and splendour than those of the rival republic. Their marble palaces, although oftentimes too spacious for the number or for the wealth of their inmates, are yet far from crumbling to ruins; private industry and enterprise surviving among that hardy and frugal race, even after the extinction of public spirit.

But if the antique origin of Italian families is, to say the least, so problematic even at Rome and in the two maritime republics, what are we to think of the pretensions of other minor houses of Romagna and Lombardy, and other provinces in which the night of the middle ages set in at

so early a period, and on which it dwelt so long, and thick, and chaotic, as to change the very face of the land? The Pepoli of Bologna, for instance, adopted a chess-board as the cognisance of their family, which they are fain to derive from Palamedes, the pretended inventor of the game of chess at the siege of Troy!

For a long lapse of ages the Italians had that horror of their barbaric descent that the Spaniards evinced in reference to any mixture of Moorish blood. Such prejudices are, however, fast wearing off; and there are few at present unwilling to admit that next to those who claim kindred with the Roman Pisos or Scipios, are to be ranked such families as can trace their source up to Gothic, Lombard, or Frankish progenitors.

The earliest feudal nobility in Italy dates from the Lombard invasion. But, before the year 1100, almost all the original thirty houses of dukes and counts of that nation amongst whom the country was originally divided, had become extinct, and a new generation of minor nobles had risen on the wrecks of those families, often bearing their titles and claiming their privileges. Of these, also, a vast number were destroyed during the popular contest of the Lombard League, or were immolated by the people in the first intoxication of triumph. A few of them, however, lived through that long ordeal of fire and sword. Their hawk-nests in the Alps and Apennines sheltered them against the first democratic effervescence, and enabled them, in progress of time, to come to a compromise with their burgher opponents, and eventually to reassert their ascendancy over them.

Few, therefore, if indeed any, of the Italian families can boast of their descent from the earliest northern feudatories; they generally derive from those comparatively obscure adventurers, who, either through usurpation or imperial bounty, stepped, as the saying goes, into their shoes, tenanted their vacant castles, and wielded their broken

sceptres. All of them, indeed, though prompted by ambition to adopt the law of the conquerors, did not belong by birth or origin to the northern race with which they claimed kindred with as much eagerness as in after ages of classical civilisation they endeavoured to disavow it. Feudalism underwent in that age an awful shipwreck, and the clumsy raft that was made to stand up in its stead was not unfrequently found to be composed of extraneous and adventitious materials.

One of the feudal or castled families (nobiltà casteliana) that first attempted a strenuous reaction against democracy was that of Ezzel, or Ezzelino, lords of Onaro and Romano, in the territories of Bassano and Padua. The first Ezzel came from Germany in the train of Conrad II., in 1036, and was son of an obscure German, named by the Italians Arpone. Ezzel, having received from that emperor the investiture of the above-mentioned estates, was induced to fix his residence in the country. His grandson, Ezzelino, renowned for prodigies of valour performed in Palestine, sided with Frederic Barbarossa at the diet of Roncaglia in 1154, and aided that emperor in the demolition of Milan in 1162. But when the rebellion of a few burghers assumed the aspect of a general revolution, that was to lead to the emancipation of Italy, Ezzelino felt the necessity of espousing the popular cause, and joined the Lombard League in 1167. He fought all their successive battles, and was found among the ranks of the leaguers on the glorious field of Legnano, in 1176. But the unnatural alliance between the Ezzelino and the people could not last long. The lords of Romano were soon reconciled with the German monarchs; and, at the rise of the Guelph and Ghibeline parties, they stood constantly at the head of the latter. The sixth and last of that family, also named Ezzelino, strong in the favour of the second Frederic, extended his tyrannic sway over the cities of Verona, Trento, and Padua; and after that emperor's demise,

throwing off all allegiance towards his successors, he ventured to aspire to the independent sovereignty of Lombardy. But the fate of that beautiful province was not yet mature. The whole country rose in a crusade against him, and after a few years of gallant resistance he was routed and wounded at Cassano, and died in the hands of his adversaries, 1259. His brother, Alberigo, who had shifted his policy from the Ghibelines to the Guelphs in the vain hope of surviving his brother's ruin, met with a still more calamitous end. His sons were beheaded, his wife and daughters burnt alive in his presence, and after witnessing their fate he was compelled to follow it, with a refinement of cruelty that all the far-famed ruthlessness of Ezzelino could scarcely authorise.

We have given at some length the rise and fall of the House da Romano, because its destinies bear no little resemblance to those of many a family, who more permanently succeeded in establishing their sway over some of the Lombard cities. To the most distinguished of these, such as the Visconti, Carrara, Gonzaga, Correggio, &c., we have made some allusion in the first part of this work. The Este and Savoy are among the few whose lustre was sent down undiminished to the present generation.

The house of Este spread as widely in Italy as it did beyond the Alps. Long before Alberto Azzo II. had made himself at home with the Guelphs in 1020, the various branches of the Malaspina and Pallavicino were established in Lunigiana, where they held feudal sway long after the extinction of feudalism throughout Northern Italy.

Had we the choice of our own descent, we would rather be derived from the Malaspina or Pallavicino than from any of the more fortunate branches of the house of Este. Though never raised by fortune to the royal dignity, these two heroic races had oftentimes a paramount influence on events that decided the fate of empires. Nothing can be more surprising than the number of immortal names that

are to be read in the long register of these families. The Pallavicino possessed large estates in the territories of Placentia and Parma as early as 1116, when the Marquis Oberto first acquired the sobriquet of *Pela-vicino* (flay-neighbour), from the rather incorrect notions he entertained about the rights of *meum* and *tuum*. Some of his descendants afterwards settled at Genoa, and their numerous branches played a most prominent part in the annals of that republic. They gave their adopted city no less than five doges, an admiral, several archbishops and bishops, three at least of whom were also raised to the purple at Rome. Other branches continued on their original estates in the Parmese territory, where their ancient castles at Busseto, Bargone, Tabiano, &c., are still extant, and not always untenanted. Others again migrated to Naples, Rome, and even beyond the Alps into Hungary, where one of their name rose to the rank of marshal of the empire. Finally, another of them, the well-known Horatio, from Genoa, came to England in the days of Queen Mary, and, having abjured Catholicism under Elizabeth, engaged in commercial speculations, in which he so far prospered as to be able to supply the queen with large sums of money, rather in accordance with patriotic devotedness than with mercantile discretion. Finally, in 1586, at the opening of the Spanish war, Horatio, true to his Genoese descent, though a Briton by act of parliament, armed at his expense a considerable number of vessels, and distinguished himself for his gallant demeanour against the Invincible Armada in 1588. He was knighted by the queen at his return; and after his decease his portrait was placed in the House of Lords among those that had well deserved of the country. This picture, by great good fortune, was among the few articles of furniture that escaped the ravages of the great fire of 1834. It is now to be seen in the British Museum, and bears the following inscription: —"Sir Horatio Pallavicino, obt. 1600." One of the suits

he wore is, we believe, in the horse armoury in the Tower. But Horatio's ambition made away with the fortune his industry had amassed. Tobias, his son, connected by marriage with the house of Cromwell, ended his life in the Fleet; and Horatio, his grandson, died childless in want and obscurity. "Sic transit gloria mundi!"

The fate of the Malaspini (Evil Thorns), afterwards Malaspina, is not essentially different. One of them, the famous Morello, held sway in Lunigiana when Dante came to him for refuge. One branch of the family for a long time held absolute sovereignty at Massa. Many of the Malaspina continue at Parma, Pontremoli, and elsewhere, but in greatly reduced circumstances.

We had, in another part of this work, occasion to mention the Correggio and Rossi, two powerful families who long contended for the supreme power at Parma. Highest in rank after them stood the Sanvitale. This family begin their genealogy with Ugo, who in 1100 built the tower of San Vitale, on the banks of the Enza. They also were Guelphs, and lavish of their blood for the Guelph cause during the memorable siege of Parma by Frederic II. In later times the ascendancy of the Ghibelines of Milan and Verona occasionally drove them from home, when, together with a great many other Lombard families from every town, they sought their refuge at Venice, and were admitted among the Venetian patricians. The Sanvitale at a very early period were Lords of Fontanellato; their castle has in all times been a favourite resort for Italian literature and art. The late Count Stefano won a wide reputation as a founder of houses of asylum and education. Not a few of the most distinguished living artists were reared up in those liberal institutions, to which the good count consecrated all his time and pretty nearly his fortune. His son, Luigi, at his death endeavoured to repair his shattered patrimony by an alliance with the house of Austria, that is, he espoused the unfortunate offspring of

Maria Louisa's frailty, more lately legitimated by a left-handed marriage with Count Neipperg, her paramour. The cousin of Luigi, Count Jacopo Sanvitale, followed a different, consequently a more losing policy. At war with all the established governments since his boyhood, he was implicated in every conspiracy that ever was brewing in subterranean Italy. Imprisoned at Fenestrelle by Napoleon in 1810, on account of a disrespectful sonnet* on the birth of the King of Rome, banished from Milan by the Austrians in 1816, sentenced to several years' imprisonment as a Carbonaro in 1820, and exiled in consequence of the insurrection of central Italy in 1831; he must be now, in spite of his eminent genius and most amiable disposition, languishing in some of the obscure *depôts* of Italian refugees in France, unless indeed his cousin's recent exaltation at the court of Parma may have smoothed the way for his return.

* We think our readers may like to see this famous *sibillone*, or sonnet à bouts rimés, which Sanvitale wrote in an unlucky quarter of an hour among a company of *friends*, and which, when it fell into the hands of the emperor and king, so bitterly provoked him, that he exclaimed, "Send the man to Fenestrelle, and let him stay there as many months as there are lines in the poem."

"PER LA NASCITA DEL RE DI ROMA.

Io mi caccio le man nella *parrucca*
Per la rabbia che proprio il cor mi *tacca*
Se compro vate vaticinii *scocca*
E un regio Mida canticchiando *stucca*.
E m' arrovello se Firenze o *Lucca*
Chitarrino strimpella o tromba *imbocca*
Per un fanciul che in culla si *balocca*
E sallo Iddio se avrà poi sale in *zucca*.
Egli è del conio della stessa *zecca*
E rammento la rana che s' *impicca*
Perchè l' astro del dì moglie si *becca*
Ecco già l' ugne in sen d' Italia ei *ficca*
E le trae sanguinose e il sangue *lecca*,
Ei che far la potea libera e *ricca*."

The Rangoni of Modena also are among the few families preserving some traces of their former splendour. They are fond of deriving their origin from German ancestors, and were landowners before 1040. Gherardo Rangoni was the first Podestà of Modena in 1156. Another Gherardo distinguished himself in the famous war of the "Rape of the Bucket" in 1249. The Rangoni were Lords of Castelvetro and Fivizzano till 1702, when the elder branch came to its end; other branches, however, are still extant, and from them sprung a few but highly distinguished ecclesiastical or literary characters. The present representative of one of these houses is simply designated by Count Litta under his Christian name "Taddeo;" but his wife deserves a more particular notice.

"Rosa, one of the daughters of Count Carlo Testi, formerly a senator in the kingdom of Italy, accused of participation in the rebellion of February 3rd, 1831, at Modena, for having embroidered a silken standard with the three colours of the Italian kingdom. This lady was condemned by a *tribunale statario* to three years' imprisonment in a fortress of state. The penalty was afterwards commuted by special clemency into a seclusion for as many years in the convent *Delle Mantellate* in Reggio." The first instance, we believe, of female handiwork being accounted high treason.

But there still exists in Modena a family, by the side of whose antiquity, even the boasted genealogy of Este appears unimportant. The Pico were certainly a distinguished family before the conquest of Charlemagne in 774, since that emperor led away into France at his return, among other hostages, Manfredo, one of that house. Many years afterwards, another Manfredo, Count of Milan, was among the opponents of Guido, Duke of Spoleto, for some time emperor and king of Italy. He continued his hostilities against Lamberto, son of Guido, also king of Italy, who laid siege to Milan, and, after an obstinate resistance,

took prisoner and beheaded the count, 896. Ugo, son of Manfredo, a youth of sixteen, also fell into the hands of the conqueror, but was pardoned. He even so far won the king's favour as to become his inseparable companion. One morning in summer, 898, King Lamberto was hunting alone with his favourite on the plain of Marengo. Wearied with long riding, he lay down to sleep. The desire of avenging his father's death had long slumbered, but was not extinct, in Ugo's heart. From that sleep Lamberto never awoke. What became of the young murderer is not known, but in 900 he was no longer Lord of Milan. From him through almost mythological traditions, the Pico, or, as they were called, "the children of Manfredo," with great plausibility derive their lineal descent. They reappear on the stage as Lords of Mirandola and imperial vicars in 1311. Ten years later Francesco Pico fell into the hands of a ruthless enemy, Passerino Bonaccolsi of Mantua; and, shut up in a dungeon with his family, he died the death of Ugolino, after having devoured two of his children. The Pico were successively created Counts of Concordia in 1432, Princes and then Dukes of Mirandola, &c. &c. Still the greatest lustre was conferred upon them by the illustrious and unfortunate Giovanni Pico, named by the Italians the phœnix of geniuses. Giovanni died childless; the descendants of his brothers were stripped of their estates by the emperor in 1706, and became extinct forty years later. The Pio, at one time Lords of Carpi and Sassuolo, who are derived from the same stock with the "children of Manfredo," are also extinct. But two different houses of their name, issuing from collateral branches, are still living at Carpi, and some of their members are still high in office; one of them, Galeazzo Pio, being Governor of Garfagnana for the Duke of Modena.

A few of the many hundred families belonging to the feudal nobility, who acted in Lombardy a subordinate part under the Visconti, Scala, Este, &c., already occur in

Count Litta's catalogue; such as the Bojardo of Reggio, Lords of Rubiera since 1095, afterwards Counts of Scandiano, extinct in 1560; Da Camino of Trevigi, powerful since 1089, and ended in 1422; the Castiglione of Milan, whose castle was built before the year 1000, and whose representatives, the lineal successors of the brave, amiable and accomplished Baldassar Castiglione, author of "Il Cortegiano," are still flourishing; the Giovio of Como, Fogliani of Reggio, Trinci of Foligno, Varano of Camerino, &c. &c., these last tracing their pedigree up to the third century of the Christian era. All these have been selected among the vast number, probably out of regard to some universally known individual, such as the poet Matteo Maria Bojardo, the historian Paolo Giovio, the poet Alphonso Varano, &c.; but were Litta really to give us the history of every feudal house of Lombardy or Romagna, of all the petty but renowned Lords of Polenta, in Ravenna; Malatesta, of Rimini; Montefeltro, of Urbino; Manfredi, of Faenza, &c. &c. &c., there would positively be no end to his labours.

To all these, which in a general point of view, and in consequence of the law which they were known to profess, we incline to consider as issued from northern, that is, from Gothic, Lombard, Frankish, or German blood, must be added the numerous descendants of those brave Norman adventurers (few in number at first, but afterwards nearly as numerous as the followers of William the Conqueror of England), who, from the latter end of the tenth to the close of the following century, founded in the south of Italy the kingdom of the Two Sicilies. The Filangieri, Caracciolo, and other Neapolitan houses, are well known to look up to those warriors as their progenitors; but not one of them has yet appeared in our author's register. Next come, at Naples, the French barons of Charles of Anjou, settled in the country since 1265; in Sicily and Sardinia, the feudal nobles, either foreign or natives, con-

stitutionally organised in an oligarchic body by the kings of Aragon; and more lately the Spanish houses, both in those islands, and at Milan and Naples, who followed in the train of the triumphant armies of Charles V. and Philip II. Finally, among the feudal nobility, may be ranged the houses of those Condottieri of the fifteenth and following centuries, the Del Verme, Malatesta, Baglioni, Coleoni, &c., many of whom, often arising from obscure and even ignominious sources, owed their rise to the might of their arm, and established their precarious sovereignty almost in every petty town of Romagna and Lombardy; some of them having the good luck, for a time, to escape the wholesale massacres by which Borgia, Della Rovere, Medici, and other such popes, contrived to rid themselves of their presence.

These, with the Colonna, Orsini, and other Roman families constitute the second great division of Italian nobility. As with the genealogy of the *classical* or ancient Roman aristocracy, the history of Venice and Genoa is more essentially connected, so are the numerous vicissitudes of every tower in the mainland written in the records of the feudal or castellated nobility. Every hill had its castle; every castle its share in the vicissitudes of the country.

But with the exception of Naples and the islands, where a shadow of feudalism might be said to continue down to the French Revolution, the castle soon ceased to exercise a paramount influence on the destinies of Italy. The *nobiltá cittadina*, or burgher aristocracy, soon eclipsed the lustre of the lords of the land. These latter, it is true, by an adroit shift of their quarters and policy, contrived to enter the citizen's ranks, and exerted themselves to the utmost of their power to forget and make others forget the lordly station they had descended from. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, many hundreds of feudal houses managed thus to merge into the municipal patriciate. Still many hundreds, also, sprung more im-

mediately from plebeian ranks, owing their rise to the incessant convulsions of republican life. The distinction between the *native* and *adoptive* burgher nobility is not easily drawn; for on the first abating of the zeal for democratic equality the ancient nobles did not fail once more to put forth their claims to illustrious descent, whilst the new men showed equal anxiety to gild over with vague traditions the real obscurity which enveloped their lineage.

Many of these undeniably burgher families, however, such as the Medici, Strozzi, Capponi, and at least five hundred at Florence, the Gambacorta, Gherardesca, and almost as many at Pisa, with equally vast numbers at Siena, Lucca, Bologna, and, in short, in every town that ever was constituted into an independent republic throughout Piedmont, Lombardy, Tuscany, and Romagna—have little reason to seek in the faint records of mediæval barbarism a lustre which they might better derive from their luminous deeds in times nearer to us. Those Florentine weavers, Milanese armourers, and Pisan bankers, were after all the performers in that great Italian drama of which the broken-down feudal lords soon became mere insignificant figures. Their domestic glories are identified with republican greatness; and to this alone did Italy owe her great triumphs in war and peace, in literature and art.

Not a few, both of the feudal and burgher nobility, found their way to court during the usurpations of domestic tyranny, and the establishment of foreign bondage. The most generous, however, preferred the silent obscurity of their mansions, or even the various vicissitudes of an exile's life. Such as followed Fortune, and accommodated themselves or even contributed to their country's enthralment, did not scorn to accept from princely bounty titles and dignities for which their forefathers in more stirring times had shown utter contempt. The Italian patricians ceased to be *great* when they were made *noble*.

Down to the extinction of their republic, the Genoese and Venetian senators disdained or affected to disdain the feudal titles which they owed either to the munificence of foreign sovereigns, or to their lordly possessions in foreign lands or the colonies. And such a man as was bowed to as "My Lord Duke," or "Prince," at Rome or Vienna, was familiarly hailed by his townspeople as plain *Andrietta Doria*, or *Baccicia Durazzo*. Even at the present day the *name* not the *title* constitutes real rank in Italy.

But in proportion as the rulers of the country were firmly seated on their throne they showed less regard to the ancient nobles, whose support could no longer be of any material use, and whose republican pride and fierceness ill brooked the degradation of courtly servility. They found more willing and abject instruments amongst men of their own choice, who owed their being to, and depended on, them alone. The low-born favourite gradually took place by the side of the aristocrat in the royal antechamber; and, as the latter too naturally shrank from a contact with his new associate, he declined further attendance on a prince who seemed bent on his utter abasement. Hence what is called purely *nobiltà cortigiana*, the fourth and less venerable class of Italian nobility.

Some of the families of this description owed their rise to the temporary sovereignty of one of their blood, and these ought to be distinguished by the appellation of *Papal* nobility. As long as the Colonna, Orsini, Frangipane, and other of the proudest baronial families of the Campagna contended for supremacy at Rome, the pope was invariably chosen from amongst the members of the prevailing faction. During two or three centuries the Papacy had become a monopoly in their hands, and, far from increasing their lustre, it often entailed the greatest disasters upon them. But in later and quieter times the Conclave obeyed other and extraneous influences; many of the popes were chosen out of regard for their holiness,

their learning, often even for their old age, for the very lowliness of their birth. Their relatives, however despised, never failed to invade and lord it over the Vatican, and were, during the pontiff's lifetime, raised to a station to which they strove to cling after his death, notwithstanding the envy of their new peers, the resentment of the people, and the ill will of the pontifical successor. The Della Rovere, Borghese, Farnese, Del Monte, and several scores more, can boast of no higher pretensions to their rank. Truly most of them did not fail to look for their titles to aristocratic distinction, in the memorials of feudal ages. Their names were historically obscure, nevertheless: and in Italy, at least, it is vain for heraldry to tell a tale that history will not substantiate.

Of the numberless hosts of courtly minions with which the inconsiderate or interested liberality of ten or twelve reigning houses has been for the last three centuries and is still swelling the peerage of every petty Italian state, nothing needs be said; a breath has made, a breath can unmake them. Where is the man mean enough to put up with a dukedom or countship, such as it is in the power of the Duke of Lucca, or the Duchess of Parma to bestow? And yet, who can number the lordly families whose titles come from no more creditable sources?

The duchy of Lucca alone, with a population scarcely larger than that of Berkshire or Buckinghamshire—a state too, only fifty years ago swayed by a jealous and exclusive oligarchy—numbers now no less than one hundred and ten titled families. In the Papal and Neapolitan states, the nobles bear at least twice as large a proportion to the population. Hardly a paltry *castello* in Romagna or Calabria, such as Bagnacavallo or Scaricalasino, but boasts its *Casino* or club of the nobles with several scores of members to frequent it; many of them, too, with the purest blood in their veins.

Nor do they all, in spite of adverse circumstances, sheer

poverty, and the contempt into which mere rank is held, vegetate in idleness and obscurity. A very great number, such as the d'Azeglio, Capponi, Sanvitale, appear foremost in the ranks of patriotism; active and sanguine in every benevolent scheme of popular improvement; others like Manzoni and Leopardi seek distinction in literature; others again, like d'Azeglio himself, come forward as cultivators of those fine arts of which their wealthier progenitors only assumed the patronage.

In Italy, also, "Blood is not water." It would be vain as it would be guilty to wish for the utter demolition of aristocratic distinction. Nobility in Italy has been abused—it has been made a by-word, dragged into the dust. What then? Till Italy learns to forget and abjure the Past, she owes reverence and gratitude to her aristocracy. Her nobles have fallen with her. Shall they have no share in her resurrection?

CHAPTER VIII.

MAYER.

National Education—Italian Universities—The Jesuits—The *Ignorantini*—Infant Schools—Sunday Schools—Enrico Mayer—Physical Education.

SINCE the idea first prevailed in Italy, that the unarmed influence of public opinion was more likely to lead to emancipation than any appeal to physical force, no question of more vital interest presented itself to the lovers of the country than that of popular education. Literature and the arts themselves are only in so far a means of civilisation as they are placed within reach of the less civilised classes. The schoolmaster must prepare the way for the liberator.

"Nowhere does the *plant man* grow so well as in Italy," was the quaint but pithy remark of Alfieri, who of all writers ought to be the least liable to the charge of patriotic partiality, if, at least, we are to believe that he was sincere in his assertion, "that Asti was his birth-place; but he looked on the whole world as his country."

That the soil and climate of the Italian peninsula is highly favourable to the growth and development of all physical, moral and intellectual faculties of the human race, as to every other kind of animal and vegetable life, it would be as idle and useless to attempt to demonstrate as it would be difficult and unjust to gainsay.

We need not go far back in the past and ascend to the happier eras of Roman and mediæval greatness, when the

high training of military discipline, or the spirit of commercial enterprise, called into action the energies of that gifted nation; we have only to visit the most obscure suburbs of the *Trastevere* at Rome, the *Molo* at Naples, and the *Porto-Franco* at Genoa, or otherwise to ramble along the whole range of the Apennines, or through the valleys of Brescia and Bergamo, to feel convinced that nature is still true to herself, and that individually *the plant man* springs from that genial ground as robust, sound, and healthful, and is as susceptible of attaining the highest degree of mental and bodily perfection, as when fostered by the blessed air of liberty, and cheered and warmed by the sacred sunbeams of religion, glory, and patriotism.

The comparative barrenness and deterioration of that privileged garden is consequently attributable only to one obvious reason—the want or the inefficiency of culture.

Education is all that constitutes the wide difference between a free citizen of the Roman commonwealth, and the ragged, priest-ridden, brutified Lazzarone, whose very worship is an abomination in the sight of God.

Hence the necessity of preparing the lowest classes for those political vicissitudes which may eventually rescue their country from its civil and religious thraldom, is universally felt among those Italian patriots who most earnestly labour at the promotion of their national cause. Every one feels that their people must be men ere they presume to be freemen: that education is the first, the surest, the most efficient and radical, as well as the only legitimate revolution. Hence this word—education—which has of late given rise to so many wild and vague speculations, on which honest men of all creeds, sects, and parties, seem equally to place implicit reliance, but to which all of them are apt to give such strange, such widely different interpretations, has made its way and created its wonted ferment even in Italy: and surely there is no country in the world so utterly in want of the redeeming influence of that most

powerful social engine, or one in which its application is likely to be attended with more immediate and luminous results. The most fertile field can best reward the toils of the husbandman.

Education has hitherto been considered only in the abstract, as if the whole social order could be made subservient to its Utopian views; as if, according to the ideas of Lycurgus and St. Simon, the political edifice could be based on the fundamental discipline of the school.

But the main object of education should be to fit man for life. It ought to instil into the youth's mind that there is a society already in existence, in which he is to fill a place, in which he will have duties to perform, hardships and storms to endure. It ought to teach man to know himself, to resign and reconcile him to his lot; to recognise and adore the hand of Providence, even in those social arrangements which might strike him as unjust and arbitrary; to lift him above the petty miseries of life, not only by a firm but by an active belief in another and a better world.

Religion is the foundation of all education. But we know of no establishment, either in Italy or elsewhere, where instruction is based on such holy principles. We know of no school, however humble, in which the hope of worldly preferment is not held up as the reward of diligence and perseverance, in which study is not considered as the great leveller which is to raise the low-born and indigent on a par with the minion of fortune.

Hence the most immediate effect of education has been hitherto only to bring up a restless, anxious generation, tortured by the cravings of inordinate ambition, maddened by rare examples of individual, exceptional success; fretting, wrestling, elbowing each other with a wrathful emulation; most apt, no doubt, to give the whole social order a rapid onward impulse, but no less tending to drive contentment from the face of the civilised world. This state of feverish activity, which allows no man to rest quietly

under his father's roof, which causes all human felicity to consist in the ascent of a few steps in that scale which rises as we climb, can, however, be turned to more practical objects and prove less pernicious to the social order in those countries which by their peculiar situation afford a more ample sphere of action. In England and America, for instance, there is less want of elbow-room than in many of the continental countries. America has a continent, England a world to colonise. On the background of civilisation there opens before the Briton and American a wide region of swamps and forests, of islands and peninsulas, a refuge for the outcasts of society. As long as Van Diemen's Land has coasts to settle on; as long as the valley of the Mississippi has marshes to drain and woodlands to clear, a rich soil and a blessed climate to rebuild broken fortunes and soothe disappointment, these two countries will proceed with uninterrupted prosperity; as long as they are in possession of such extensive and immediate means of getting rid of all corrupting elements, corruption cannot strike deep roots. Civil and religious passions may ruffle the surface, but the waters are too shallow to be much troubled by storms.

The continental nations, with the exception perhaps of heroic Greece and mediæval Italy, have never well understood this system of colonisation, on which, however, more than on any constitutional providence, lies the secret source of social security. They never learnt, as the Britons, to carry their country along with them, to bid their homes a lasting farewell without looking back or repining. The Briton is the true cosmopolite. The dread of penury is stronger in him than home-sickness. Disappointed in one branch of industry, he calmly turns to another; crossed by fortune at home, he resignedly migrates to new climates.

Southern people never well understood, nor can be made to understand, the blessings of emigration. The Spaniards laid waste a whole world and exhausted themselves in a work

of destruction. The French are undergoing the severest sacrifices to subdue a colony which they will never be able to turn to any profitable account. But Italy has not even an African colony, wherein to dispose of its hundreds of thousands of adventurers every year. The Italians are too fatally in love with their country to be induced, even by utter distress, to emigrate. They are the least migratory, therefore it must be feared the most stationary, race in Europe. Expatriation is for them always exile; and this word is still in that country associated with all the horrors it had under the Roman empire, when the outcast had to choose between the steppes of Scythia and the deserts of Libya.

Hence, of all civilised countries, Italy is under the most urgent necessity of relying on its own resources. These are indeed inexhaustible; and it is difficult to understand why two-and-twenty millions of people cannot live at their ease in a country where in happier ages a population three times larger has been known to thrive.

Were we even to admit that home-sickness is for an Italian an incurable complaint that education and opportune provisions could not wean from that fascinating country a few of its spoiled children, that they might make room for "their betters," as it is done in happy old England; or were it even to be taken for granted that such a measure would be no more advisable than it is practicable, what else then should be inculcated among the first principles of education into the mind of the Italian people, but that theirs is the true land flowing with milk and honey; that it never did, never could, prove ungrateful to the cares bestowed upon it by its cultivators; that penury and distress can only arise from their indolence and unthriftiness; that the apparent barrenness of some of its districts is only owing to neglect or mismanagement, but that their own rich, luxurious, bountiful land, will always be sufficient to them and to all that may spring from them; that theirs is

the home-field in which, according to that dying father's golden advice, they are to dig, and dig incessantly, sure that their treasure lies buried therein?

Education in Italy should, then, have an essentially agricultural tendency.

Now nowhere is that first and noblest of arts, agriculture, held in more utter contempt than in the country of Fabricius and Cincinnatus—those dictator-husbandmen. The non-residence of landed proprietors on their estates, the imperfect state of the roads, the unfrequency and slowness of commercial communications, contribute to keep the Italian peasant in a state of nearly absolute isolation. Like the oaks and elms of his field, he is rooted to the spot where he grew. He is generally honest, and guileless, because he is trained up in what is there called the "holy fear of God"—because his parish priest, different from the pampered prelate in town, is himself too artless and primitive to have any power, and too undesigning or unambitious to have any interest, to deceive him. He is sober and frugal, thanks to his poverty, to the enfeebling influence of climate; he is, at least in Lombardy and Tuscany, laborious and diligent, in consequence of the reward that, owing to the liberal system of *mezzadria*, is sure to attend his work; but he is ignorant beyond all human conception. He is a creature of habit; a ploughing, reaping, thrashing machine, and as such jealous and mistrustful of every mechanical innovation, which, by endeavouring to alleviate, might, he apprehends, supersede the necessity of his incessant material exertions: he opposes his force of inertia to all personal or technical improvement; he clings with a superstitious pertinacity to the picturesque, perhaps, but clumsy and unwieldy instruments, and to the old-fashioned systems of husbandry illustrated by Columella and Virgil. A being, in short, not many degrees above the dumb and tardy brute, the sharer of his toil.

That such a degraded race and their humble employment

should be looked upon with no better feeling than commiseration we can easily understand; and we may also readily believe that the humanity of generous souls may have been prompted to raise so large, so useful and important a class from their helpless state of actual serfage and Helotism.

But the education of the labourer must be effected by a universal revolution in the ideas of mankind. His humble calling must be revered and honoured; he must be made proud and fond of the share he has in the public welfare; he must feel that, although there may be higher and prouder stations in life, his own is not only far from being despised or abject, but is, on the contrary, the one that is most conducive to health, contentment and innocence, as well as one of paramount, of vital importance. The first object of education, in Italy at least, should be to make every man satisfied with his lot. Yet with the exception of a few private institutions, such as the agricultural school at Meleto, and the so-called technical schools of Lombardy, the object of all philanthropic establishments directed to improve the moral and intellectual condition of the peasantry and of all the labouring classes, seems rather to subtract a few individuals from the common share of misery and ignorance of their fellow labourers than to attempt a general reform of the whole *caste*.

"Study, my son,"—says the aged husbandman, who has begun to taste of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and who judges of things according to the estimate of worldly wisdom. "Work and endure. Yet one year or two of fagging and perseverance and thou wilt fling sickle and spade for ever from thee, thou wilt throw off this coarse jacket from thy shoulders and don a doctor's gown or a clergyman's surplice. Look about thee, my son, who was our curate but a farmer's boy? I saw him with my own eyes a poor cripple, crawling after his father's pigs. What was our *prætor?* why, a coachman's lad whom his master

through charity sent to a law school at Pisa, and now, thou seest, he keeps coach and coachmen himself, and fares like a lord. Study, my son; thou art a smart and clever lad, as your schoolmaster said when I brought him the fat goose at Christmas. While thy father lives, were it to cost me my last mouthful of bread, thou shalt lack nothing in the world. Perhaps I shall not live to see it, but the thought of having withdrawn thee from the hardships of this wretched life will follow me to my grave and lighten the earth on my bones." It is thus that the dawn of civilisation breaks on the peaceful slave of the soil. It is thus that with the idea of mental emancipation he always associates a vain aspiration after worldly advancement. Selfishness assumes the sacred character of paternal tenderness, and affection lends its sanction to the most deplorable illusion.

From the lowest to the highest ranks of society, this fatal restlessness conspires against the peace and serenity of men's minds, and its influence is the more universally and irresistibly felt, the greater the result of that fictitious state of mental improvement, which is universally mistaken for education. Thus the poor, ignorant husbandman may perhaps covet for his son no higher preferment than a humble place among the pampered menials of his landlord's household, and the footman or butler perhaps aspires no higher than to have his son apprenticed to a woollen draper's shop, but the shopkeeper's clerk is sure to send his son to the university; so that after two or three generations, at the most, by a regular gradation, if not by a sudden transition, the good farmer's most sanguine hopes are sure to be realised, and he may rest at peace in his grave under conviction of having spoiled a good farmer to make an indifferent doctor.

It is true that such a state of rebellion against the dispensations of Providence is as ancient as man himself; as ancient at least as the "Qui fit, Mæcenas," of Horace. It is true that it is more general and more active in those

countries which boast a higher degree of social improvement, that nowhere are so many strange metamorphoses to be seen as in America, where the same individual is by turns a farmer, a merchant, a physician, a clergyman, a professor of a university, and a member of congress: but besides the peculiar circumstances in which that country, as we have said, is happily situated, the American is almost as ready for a downfal as for a rise; and it is not uncommon in that country, during one of those commercial crises that go by the name of "hard times," to see hundreds of Boston or Philadelphia merchants, accustomed to all the splendour and luxuries of life in their Atlantic cities, repair to their western backwoods with holy resignation, and betake themselves to that hard but wholesome planter's life from which themselves perhaps, or at least their fathers, have sprung.

But in our old countries there is no unexplored region to fall back upon. Once fallen, our speculator has nothing to do but to sit down in despondency, bemoan his losses, and increase the list of hangers-on and malcontents. Italy has no navy or army, no houses of parliament, and scarcely any but the most passive commerce and trade. There is no career open to juvenile ambition but the university. Whoever is too lazy to be a farmer or tradesman, or too proud to be a shopkeeper; whoever has no voice to be a singer or no courage to starve as an artist, must neces sarily set up for what is there emphatically called "a professional gentleman."

Thanks to the liberal endowments of the numerous academical institutions, nothing can be easier in Italy than to become a doctor. Almost every town of any consequence boasts its university, besides a number of colleges, lyceums, gymnasiums, seminaries and other preparatory schools. Every thing seems calculated to smooth the path to that happy goal which appears to the many the *nè plus ultra* of sublunary felicity. The directors of those learned institu-

tions seem to pride themselves above all things in seeing their halls swarming with crowds of expectant students from every class, and setting every year new batches of hungry M. A.'s, D. D.'s, LL. D.'s and M.D.'s loose upon society.

We may appreciate the generous and philanthropic spirit that presided over the foundation of these truly republican institutions. They arose in dark ages, when the mind first engaged in its glorious struggle against brutal strength. Its champions were few and weak, and, feeling the necessity of numerous allies and coadjutors, they left nothing unattempted to enlist new proselytes in their cause. But now the battle has been fought and won. Now the motto of the doctors of Bologna, "Cedant arma togæ," has become the order of the day, and all civilised nations are ruled by, what were the bug-bear of Napoleon and his fellow-campaigners, the *avocats*. Now, scholarship has become a profession, a trade, more neat and decent, may be, but not more useful or respectable, than a great many others. Modern science no longer requires men of extraordinary genius any more than modern religion has need of prophets and martyrs. A man endowed with very common understanding can make an excellent surgeon or solicitor. Diligence and assiduity are more important requisites for a "professional gentleman" than the brightest imaginative faculties.

It is, however, of the greatest importance to bear in mind the republican origin of the Italian Universities, in order to account for the liberal tendencies they invariably developed under the various phases of Italian political life, and the untamed spirit of republicanism they do exhibit even in their present prostrate condition.

From their primitive origin the Italian Universities had nothing in common with the half-monastic establishments of transalpine theological schools. Italy was, in the middle ages, the only European country developing any symptom

of social and practically-intellectual life. The Italian Universities were, consequently, schools for the people; not for priests and monks only, but for the whole social body. They were, therefore, invariably grounded on principles of utter equality. As, in some German institutions of the present day, the son of the reigning prince sat side by side, on the same form, with the meanest commoner. There were no privileged "Christ Churches" or "Trinities," or other Patrician nurseries. The university had but one college: admission was free and open. Within its walls no distinction was acknowledged, save only of genius. The young Torquato Tasso met the scions of the reigning house of Mantua as class-mates at Padua, and contracted with them an intimacy that lasted through life. There were then and there are now hardly any means of education but what the university affords. Private instruction is considered less advantageous to the development of manly character, and the *Collegi de' Nobili*, which flourished at Parma and elsewhere during the last century, are generally discountenanced as remnants of monastic barbarism.

Victims, as they are, of hopeless political division, the Italians cherish their university, even as their church, as one of the few remaining bonds of unity; they meet at school as brethren; and it is there more than any where else that the national spirit was always cherished and fostered in all its intensity. There rest the best hopes for its future resurrection.

As the Italian Universities were instituted with practical views, and their interests wound up with those of the state, the consequence was that, on the one side, they were almost entirely free of expense, and, on the other, they never provided any endowment for scholarships—offered no encouragement to indigent students.

Their object was not to rear up recruits for the church or for any other profession. (There are Episcopal se-

minaraies for that purpose, totally unconnected with the university.) They were intended for the universal education of the people, and so long as the state consisted only of one city, or of a petty district, they amply provided for the wants of the whole community. The school-rooms were open to all: no fees were exacted. Every citizen could come in for as much instruction as he had leisure or occasion for.

Nothing is changed in the Italian Universities in this respect. Instruction is still equally free. The regular students are expected to pay a matriculation fee of *ten sous* on their first admission, and at the commencement of every year. The conferring of the different degrees, also, occasions an expense of fifteen to fifty francs; but, as these are the professors' perquisites, and they are aware of the unpopularity of the charge, the custom of refunding the fees to all indigent or talented students has become so general as to reduce that trifling tax to a mere dead letter.

But, besides the regular students, the lecture-rooms are equally open to every person that may feel inclined to attend: these, under the name of *Uditori* or Hearers, crowd the room of popular professors, without any other condition than that of quiet and decent behaviour; and as a great part of the professors' teachings, especially in mathematical and natural sciences, are purposely made to bear on the practical uses of science, and on its reference to the useful arts, the consequence is, that the mechanic and tradesman can derive as much information as their employment requires; and this with more method and order, and on easier terms than at any of the literary institutions, by which private enterprise in free countries endeavours to supply the want of popular instruction.

It is, therefore, very clear that the old republican system of the Italian Universities has, to a great extent, solved the difficult problem of public education; for, if

we bear in mind that almost every other town in Italy can boast of a university, good, bad, or indifferent, or otherwise has the benefit of a gymnasium or high-school dependent on the main seminary; so that, in fact, every inhabitant may be said to live next door to the house of learning, it may be easily conceived, that they only need extend and popularise the instruction they afford to answer the demands of all the classes of society.

It is idle, I believe, to ascribe the unsettled state of men's minds, and the rush of students to the learned professions, to the frequency and cheapness of academical institutions. The total extinction of public life, the want of honourable and proficuous employment, leaves no other resource to popular ambition. The universities, however, would work very differently in a more favourable state of society. There is no harm in every man being as learned as a doctor, though it is very plain society cannot consist of doctors exclusively.

It is confidently asserted—though it is too pleasing a feature of modern society to be easily admitted as true—that a nation of doctors does actually exist; and this, where it might least be expected, among the swamps and forests of the island of Sardinia. That smiling and happy, but less than half civilised country, boasts of two universities at Cagliari and Sassari, erected, or, perhaps, only restored, in 1764. In those two seminaries a rude, primitive population of goatherds and woodsmen is found, amongst whom knowledge is pursued for its mere sake, and without any views of personal aggrandisement.

The young herdsman comes down, shaggy and uncouth from his chestnut forests, and hires himself out as a servant to some of the rich burghers of the town, stipulating for sufficient leisure to attend lectures at college, and after "eating his terms," in want and humiliation, and going through all the academical degrees, he repairs to his home in the mountains, rough and rugged still in his outward

appearance, but a regenerated man within; hangs his laurel on his father's hut, and walks out after his father's flocks, dignified, stately, every inch a doctor.

We may conceive of the possibility of a day in which the universality of men may, like the Sardinian shepherds, be induced to follow learning merely for its soothing, cheering, humanising influence, when they will seek knowledge principally, if not exclusively, in order better to understand their mission—to grace and dignify their station, whatever it may be, rather than from a sordid desire "to better themselves;" and we are confident, then, that a system analogous to that of the Italian Universities, and their elementary schools, with a judicious method of practical instruction, calculated to suit the peculiar wants of every class, and at the same time intimately connected with the general objects of social life, may contribute, in no small degree, to place national education on the soundest basis.

But the Italian Universities are far indeed from resting, at the present day, on that system of practical usefulness which might enable them to answer the purpose of national schools on an extensive scale. Like all other sublunary things, they began to decline as soon as they swerved from their organic principles. The all-absorbing prevalence of classical studies, occasioned, especially, by the great influx of Grecian literature in the fifteenth century, had the effect of deterring the multitude from their usual attendance at the lecture-room. The professors, they felt, began to talk "Greek." There was something chilly and death-like in their learned disputations, something obsolete and unprofitable. Even Latin itself, which had continued to be the common language of the country long after the formation of vernacular idioms, became more and more unintelligible to the people, in proportion as it received a higher polish in the hands of industrious schoolmen. The school, no less than the church, found itself in a state of isolation from the very vehicle with which it insisted on conveying its

instruction. A lecture, like the mass, became a mystery. Every word sounded like a spell in the ears of the illiterate.

The university merged thus into the mere academy: the people ceased to take an interest in its transactions, in its welfare, in its very existence; and ended by abandoning it to the tender mercies of a despotic ruler who patronised only to fetter and degrade it.

Thrown thus upon princely support, the universities of Italy directed their efforts to less general and practical purposes. The study of the law, which gave them so wide an ascendancy in republican times, lost much of its interest, and was in the end all but utterly relinquished, in that general relentless, remorseless conculcation of private and public rights, which made law, in Italy, synonymous with injustice and extortion. The establishment of the Inquisition, the increasing rigour of ecclesiastical discipline, and the lethargic rule of the Jesuits, hushed up for ever all religious and philosophical inquiry. The craven maxim "*Nihil de Principe—parum de Deo*" was written on the portals of all learned institutions, discountenancing such studious pursuits as might lead to any allusion to the great vital questions of religious and political interests. In later times, when the native reigning families became extinct one by one, the last vestiges of intellectual life that might linger still around those Italian sanctuaries of learning, were trodden in the dust by the brutal bigotry of foreign dominators. The Spaniards, with their Dominicans and Jesuits, brought a more than mediæval darkness into Italy. The contents of our libraries were shut up against the student's curiosity by the Roman index. The chairs of political economy, of moral philosophy—nay, even of agriculture, were suppressed, on account of their direct or indirect tendencies to political subversion. Knowledge became once more a forbidden fruit. Living knowledge, I mean, for *della Cruscan* philology and Arcadian

literature could always rely on royal favour and countenance.

But the reawakened energies of the Italian population, consequent upon the terrific convulsions of the French revolution, precluded now the possibility of a return to the insipidities of a mere academical life. The university became the interpreter of public opinion, the focus of patriotic longings and hopes. From their very origin they inclosed in their bosom the elements of social life. They must either be utterly destroyed, or become the main instrument of national regeneration.

The Italian governments tried the former course; they set earnestly about their work of destruction. Pavia and Padua received their death-stroke in 1820, when all foreigners—by such an appellation were Italians distinguished every where out of the limits of their native territory—were by an Imperial Decree denied admittance into any of the Lombardo-Venetian Universities;—a sweeping measure, which at once reduced these institutions to one-half of their former average numbers. Bologna suffered from similar regulations in return for the active part it took in the political troubles of 1831. Turin and Genoa had already been dissolved ten years before, and delivered into the hands of the Jesuits. The *studii* of Parma were divided into two branches—the one established at Parma—the other at Piacenza—the narrow compass of the State luckily admitting of no further subdivision; whilst the Duke of Modena, always partial to summary measures, rid himself of his clamorous schoolboys, by wholesale proscriptions and banishments.

Pope Pius the Ninth, and the benignant influence of milder stars, preside now over the destinies of the Italian Universities. Matters had been brought to such extremities as must needs lead to a speedy reaction. Already, before 1840, some improvement was observable in Tuscany, chiefly at Pisa. New chairs were added to the several

faculties, such as the *Storia del Diritto, Filosofia del Divitto, Diritto Patrio e Commerciale, Economia Politica, Filosofia mentale*, &c., eminently Italian sciences, from which Italy had too long been forcibly estranged. Similar measures have been lately adopted in Rome and Turin. The latitude of public opinion, resulting from the new law of Censorship, cannot fail to have important results on philosophical inquiry; and important reforms in the administration of justice will eventually give a fresh start to legal studies.

The substitution of Italian for the learned languages will have no trifling effect towards popularising academical studies. Up to a very recent period no provision was made at the University for the cultivation of the national tongue, and the student was left to pick up as much of it from books as he could contrive by his private exertions. All tuition was imparted through the channel of a dead language. Professors of the old school often delivered their discourses in Latin, and from sheer ignorance of Italian had recourse to a vile provincial dialect for the purpose of expounding and commenting upon them.

All these evils have ceased to be. In obedience to the newly aroused spirit of nationality, the University has been Italianised all over Italy; and that very province—which from territorial position, or old associations, seemed hardly aware of its consanguinity with Rome and Tuscany—Piedmont, is now the most zealous in the vindication of its claims as a Cisalpine nation, and begins its *renaturalisation* by a diligent cultivation of the common tongue.

The usefulness of the Italian Universities depends on their restoration to their original institution. Their charters were dictated in obedience to the democratic tendencies of the age that brought them into being. Their regulations—so long as they were safe from Jesuitical influence—were always dictated agreeably to fair and liberal views. The appointment of professors, the conferring of degrees,

invariably took place by public concurrence, and after satisfactory public examinations. Jews, Greeks and foreign Protestants were admitted on terms of equality, and exempted from all oaths of allegiance to the established creed. Nor were the Italians themselves pressed very hard on matters of religious opinion.

Aware of the state of scepticism and unbelief so rife amongst the Italian youth, the Universities, with the exception of those of the Roman States, or such as were placed under the control of the Jesuit, exacted as little from the students on religious matters as might be compatible with the dignity of the dominant church; sensible that coercion would only lead to exasperation and rebellion, they winked at the evasion and even open infraction of chapel regulations. This latitude was, indeed, rather abuse than toleration, licentiousness rather than liberty. But it led to a mutual compromise between the conservatism of the ruler and the free-thinking tendencies of the subject. It was perfectly in keeping with that system of falsehood and hypocrisy, which despotism must needs bring with it; and no one dreamed of finding fault with the convenient arrangement. It was otherwise, however, at Modena, at Turin, or wherever else Jesuitism gained ground. Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, the same amphibious being—half priest, half soldier—half despot, half patriot—who is now for the third time in his life acting a liberal part—had, by the means of those black auxiliaries—the Company of Loyola—introduced as thorough a discipline in his gymnasiums as he had in his regiments. Candidates for matriculation at the University were bound to produce a passport, in the shape of a certificate, from their father-confessor. They were made to attend more masses than lectures, and their reverend instructors busied themselves more about their conscience than about their scholastic proficiency *. So many mean con-

* "The scholars of the gymnasiums," says a recent traveller, "are not allowed to read any books which have not been either given or furnished

trivances to extend an all-watchful espionage, so blind a severity to force a belief down the throat of unwilling disciples, a system of fraud, of blandishment, of intimidation, led to such results as might have been readily anticipated. There are anecdotes belonging to the University of Turin, during the disgraceful period of which we are now, perhaps, witnessing the cessation, which may give a better idea of the feelings of the Piedmontese youths under that odious constraint, than any elaborate dissertation on its particulars.

A young student of medicine, well known at Turin for mental and moral qualities, was suspected to submit with reluctance to the performance of religious duties. One morning he knelt with his fellow-students at the Communion-table, penetrated with the indignity of that sacrilegious, because compulsory, act of devotion. The officiating priest drew near and the holy host was laid on the lips of the student's tongue. The priest's hands were unwashed—not an uncommon circumstance with the lower ranks of Italian priesthood—and the young Turinese, who had not broken his fast, seized with a sudden nausea, turned abruptly, spat the wafer on the floor, and, thus hoping to conceal his rash deed, laid his foot upon it. No one can describe the fury of Charles Albert at the announcement of the atrocious profanation. The criminal was thrown, un-

by the prefect. They are forbidden to swim, to frequent theatres, balls, coffee or gaming houses; to perform in private plays and the like; and it is the business of the police to see these prohibitions attended to.

"The students are not only under strict scientific superintendence, but also under the close *surveillance* of the police. No student is allowed to choose his dwelling or leave it without permission of the prefect, who appoints the place where he is to lodge and board.

"Whoever wishes to receive students into his house must undertake the responsibility for their observance of the laws which regulate their going to mass and confession, fasting, and even their clothing and their beards. Neglect of these rules is punished by exclusion from the examinations, or from the university itself."

heard, untried, into a dungeon, where he has lain ever since, and may be laying still, awaiting his Majesty's good pleasure.

Another set of law-students, on the eve of receiving the highest degrees, were tempted to celebrate the happy close of their academical labours by a friendly banquet in the privacy of their lodgings.

They may not have been over scrupulous in the choice of their amusements, but they were sufficiently quiet and orderly, nor was it wise to raise the veil that covered their nocturnal carouse. Midnight had long since struck; and Turin, unlike any other Italian town, was for more than an hour plunged into its usual death-like stillness of sleep; when a loud knocking at the door announced the ill-timed, but not at all extraordinary visit of the Prefect—proctor would be the word in England. The boarding-houses open for the accommodation of students are liable to frequent interruptions, by day and night, on the part of the officers of the University, charged with the superintendence of the students' conduct at home. The landlord, who, according to the terms of his licence, is bound to perform the duties of a spy upon his boarders, but who, in the present instance, won by the kindness and liberality of the students, had thought proper to wink at the riot and racket that was going on within his walls, rose to admit the dangerous visitor. The silence that immediately reigned in the house, and the protestations of the conniving housekeeper, were not sufficient to reassure the suspicious Jesuit. He was shown up to the students' dormitories, and asked for immediate admittance. The affrighted rioters, pretending to be roused from their slumbers, with extinguished candles and breathless silence, acted their part to the best of their abilities, pleading their reluctance to appear before his Reverence in the unseemliness of their nightly attire. All in vain! The priest continued to roar and storm at the door, threatening to call in the beadles and obtain an entrance by

main force. The students' fears now gave place to indignation, and this again to a desperate resolution. They threw the door ajar, so as to admit only one-half of their impatient and wrathful intruder, who, as he edged in, was caught like a mouse in a trap, pressed savagely between the door and the wall, and well-nigh squeezed to death; nor was he released, till, under the infliction of torture, he had solemnly promised and vowed to retire without further annoyance, and hold his peace ever afterwards.

No sooner had the king risen from his breakfast on the morrow—a Jesuit was in those blessed days sure of admission at any hour of the day—than the hot-pressed inspector sued for admittance, and amazed his monarch by an envenomed exposition of the indignities he had been made to endure. The offenders were immediately placed under arrest; a fulminating decree of expulsion from all the Universities of the kingdoms immediately ensued. So that the honest and brilliant career that the ceremony of the morrow was to open before them was irreparably closed by the unhallowed, but not wholly unpardonable frolic of the evening.

Such was the influence exercised by the Company of Loyola wherever they established their rule. This body of clever, wary, sleepless beings were watching every opportunity of regaining their ascendancy over those states, whence the hasty and insolent demeanour of their predecessors in the last century had driven them. The Restoration of 1814 raised a few of their houses from the ground at Rome and Modena. The pontificate of Pius IX. found them permanently settled all over Italy.

Their crafty policy soon taught them the plan on which state-education should be based. Theirs is the true university, extending its manifold branches over the whole community. The office their own order performs at the college, their humbler auxiliaries—the *Ignorantini*—discharge in the primary schools. The system is one and the same; only the aristocratic Jesuit shrinks from a con-

tact with the children of the poor, he gives them up to his brethren of the Écoles Chrétiennes. These latter have all the ugliness, though hardly the sting and venom of the former; the very ignorance from which they seem proud to take their name prevents them from exercising as extensive a mischief; their purpose is less to corrupt than to stultify the human souls intrusted to their care—to bring them under the allegiance of "Ignorance."

Every traveller must have been struck, when visiting Piedmont, the south of France, or indeed, now, all Catholic Europe, by the appearance of those long processions of boys drawn up in two rows, with their eyes cast upon the ground, their arms folded to the breast, marching in a profound silence, order, and gravity, on their way to the *Benedizione*, under the escort of two or more long-robed monks, very dark and very fat, with a marble, lustrous countenance, with a stern, glossy look, carrying a black, greasy *Ufficio* in their left hand and a birch-rod in the right.

These priests, it may be said, are the means of removing several hundreds of ragged urchins from the streets, and employing them in harmless, if unprofitable, pursuits; here, however, is an authentic account of the knowledge imparted to their pupils by the good fathers:—"Every morning: 1, a quarter of an hour religious reading (i. e. 'Le sette allegrezze' and 'I- sette dolori' of the Virgin Mary, ascetic effusions to the 'Sacro Cuore di Giesù,' and the like); 2, the hymn 'Veni, Creator;' 3, according to the season the Ambrosian hymn, and other extracts from the *Ufficio della Beata Vergine* (all Latin but the title-page); 4, mass; 5, hymn or the litanies of the Holy Virgin; 6, spiritual instruction (that is, long commentaries on the mysteries of incarnation, transubstantiation, &c.); 7, the psalm 'Laudate, pueri' and a prayer for the king. In the afternoon: 1, a quarter of an hour of religious reading; 2, hymn and prayer; 3, three quarters of an hour explanation of the catechism (namely, dissertations on the importance

of fasting, confessing, and otherwise observing the five commandments of the Church). The schools last three and a half hours in the forenoon, and two and a half hours in the afternoon."

In similar manner are the rising generation provided with moral and religious instruction in the gymnasiums. For the rest of the population, who have no leisure or inclination to attend those daily establishments, Sunday schools, under the name of "Dottrina Cristiana," are, or ought to be, opened throughout the country. But the little attention almost universally paid to the observance of the seventh day greatly interferes with a regular organisation of this wholesome institution. Neither in the Jewish nor in the Mahometan, we could almost say in none of the living, religious denominations, is this practice more disregarded than in Catholic countries, and in none of the Catholic countries more so than in Italy. Here, indeed, the evil cannot be imputed to negligence on the part of the church. The houses of public worship remain open on Sundays, as on every day, from earliest dawn till late in the evening. Prayers and sacraments, high and low masses, vespers and rosaries are reiterated at every hour of the day. The festive bells, loud even to annoyance, announce the day of the Lord. The clergy of all classes waste admonitions and reprimands against irreverence and profanation. But the original cause of such a disorder is to be referred to the church herself, and dates from the days of ignorance and barbarism, when, fearing lest the unthinking mass of the lowest classes of people should abandon themselves to excesses of vice and intemperance, she countenanced and authorised such plays and spectacles as could be innocently substituted for the more brutal games of wild beasts and gladiators, of which the memory was still dear to the sons of the Romans. The fault of the Catholic Church in this, as in most of her institutions, is the consequence of decrepitude. Using an authority

which they believed they held from Heaven, the popes and the general councils adopted such modifications and restrictions as they judged consonant with the passions of the ages of darkness and violence through which Christianity has passed; and it would, perhaps, be difficult to bring any argument against the soundness and expediency of any of the Catholic laws and practices, if considered in relation to the ages and countries for which they were intended. But now that the progress of civilisation has removed the causes which seemed to call forth these institutions, to insist upon their sanctity and inviolability implies either a conviction that our generation unites the barbarism of all past ages, or a design of driving the world back to barbarous ages again. The service of the Catholic Church, consisting in showy ceremonies, principally directed to strike the senses, though it may, at times, effect powerful impressions, is not apt to excite a lasting interest or to afford any kind of intellectual entertainment. Hence, as soon as released from immediate attention to the spectacle exhibited before his eyes, the Catholic, with a mind unused to meditation and fond of excitement, turns to pleasure the rest of that day that the church has exempted from the toils of life.

With a people and clergy so lightly and carelessly disposed, it must be obvious that Sunday-schools, established as they are pretended to be ever since San Carlo Borromeo, have done little towards the improvement of public morals. Religious instruction has indeed, no matter how long since, been regularly afforded in every parish church on Sundays, and parents have been warmly recommended, and even obliged, to send their children. But the example of the parents themselves, accustomed to look on the Sabbath rather as on a day of recreation than religious meditation, cannot fail to have the worst effect. Moreover the extreme ignorance, carelessness, and indolence of the clerks on whom the office of teachers devolves, and the

abstruseness and mysticism of the Catholic Catechism, frustrates every hope of ever bringing that scanty and imperfect instruction to bear upon the pupil's understanding. Indeed not the slightest attempt is made towards it. Children are directed to repeat every chapter of the *Dottrina Cristiana* till they have got it materially by heart, when they are considered as fit to be admitted to the sacraments. On the anniversary of the solemnities of the *Corpus Domini*, the children of every parish are mustered up in a long procession, and promenaded about town dressed in fanciful costumes of lambskins, gay ribbons, and flowers, bearing lighted tapers in their hands, preceded by the parish standard, and singing psalms and hymns; and he and she and they, who have recited the *Dottrina Cristiana* with the least hesitation and stammering, closing the rear clad in courtly robes as king, queen, knights and maids of honour, &c., which distinctions and insignia are intended to last for a whole week, during which the juvenile monarchs and their attendants are loaded with presents and caresses, and crammed with sweetmeats at every convent and nunnery in town.

All this may prove maternal tenderness and charity on the part of the Catholic Church, but cannot equally be brought forward as a proof of her discernment and judgment; and we must, indeed, have been hitherto stating facts and describing manners and customs to no purpose, if, from what we have said, it does not result, that, even were we unwilling to question the soundness and sanctity of the Catholic morals, were we not to doubt the holy influence of many of the tenets and rites of the Church of Rome, nothing whatever is done by their clergy, even after their own views, either in any manner addressing the understanding or intended to penetrate the heart. A religion of symbols and ceremonies, almost exclusively directed to impress the senses, almost entirely dealing in mysteries

and asceticism, is not calculated to forward the interests of a liberal, rational, practical education. Without going the whole length of accusing the Catholic priests as teachers of immorality, we have no hesitation in denying their influence as instruments of moral instruction. For them the man is sufficiently educated that has been trained to place on them the most absolute, implicit reliance. The illiterate peasant, the idiot, are the best of Christians.

The incompetence, or at least insufficiency, of their priesthood to administer to the wants of an active and intellectual age is so forcibly felt, in Italy, even by the most conscientious Catholics, that the whole nation seems to have come to the determination of sharing at least with them, if not altogether taking education out of their hands. In the north of Italy, under the Austrian and Sardinian governments, the state has provided for the organisation of infant and primary schools. In Tuscany, at Parma and a few other states, they have been left to the exertion of private beneficence; at Rome and Modena they have been interdicted with all the jealousy and violence of arbitrary governments. The south lies still in an almost total darkness of barbarism.

At Milan and Venice such institutions have been almost altogether placed under the rule of the laity. In Piedmont, as we have seen, Jesuits and Ignorantini have every thing under their control.

Travellers give satisfactory accounts of the state of these incipient establishments in the Lombardo-Venetian provinces. Where government takes public instruction under its immediate responsibility, little of course is left to the zeal of private individuals, besides a prompt and cheerful compliance with the law. There is no doubt but that the Austrian government, when proceeding to the organisation of primary instruction, only acted in compliance with the urgent demands of the most enlightened part of the na-

tion; and that the funds for the erection and maintenance of schools have been and are chiefly furnished by private donations and voluntary contributions.

All this may go far to prove that the natural good sense and intelligence of the Italian people needed no great compulsion to enter into the views of their legislators. Still but few of the lowest classes can be made to understand and value the blessings of education, and the rest must be guided to their own good by the argument of force. Now the law compels parents to send children to school between the ages of six and twelve, and a fine of half a *lira* per month is incurred by those who neglect to do so, but it is not enforced in Lombardy. It is much to be regretted that it should not be, and that the fear of causing some irritation among the lowest classes, or other less honest reasons, should deter the Austrian government from following up to the last their salutary regulation. What else, indeed, would be the use of despotism, if, when sure of the vote of the wide majority, when intimately convinced of the sacredness of its undertaking, it should hesitate to bring to reason a few degraded beings whom their very brutality renders refractory and restive?

Have not parents been deprived by law of the right they enjoyed under the Romans of killing, selling, or disinheriting their children? Why should they not be equally deprived of their authority of killing their children's souls, by suffering them to wallow in all the wretchedness of ignorance and vice?

It is only with this object that the centralising omnipotence of a despotic government may more readily prevail against the natural sluggishness or stubbornness of a degraded population, that the Italian patriots have resigned education into the hands of their rulers. Were it otherwise—were it not because they felt that coercive measures would be necessary to induce a few unnatural parents to perform the most sacred of their duties—they needed not

to lay their funds and their cooperation at the disposal of the state; since, under any other point of view, it was neither advisable nor desirable that the great mover of public education should be utterly and unconditionally placed under governmental control. In Tuscany, where the Grand Duke never encouraged, but never at least interfered with, the progress of popular instruction, voluntary associations and subscriptions have led to no less splendid results.

The imperial government could not of course be expected to give its Lombard subjects any but a thoroughly Austrian education. Thus we see, for instance, not without regret, that the rising generation in the gymnasiums are directed to study not the history of their own country, but that of the Austrian monarchy; that students are not allowed to read even such works as the "Conversations' Lexicon," &c. These jealous and narrow-minded restrictions are far from answering the hopes of the most liberal Italians, who have every reason to expect that the diffusion of useful knowledge would soon lead them, at least, to as much rational latitude and freedom of inquiry as is now enjoyed, under the same absolute rule, by the subjects of the Prussian monarchy.

Popular education in England, in America, in almost every other civilised country, may or should have no other object than to promote the greatest happiness of the lowest classes by improving their intellectual and moral condition. But in an enslaved, divided, distracted country like Italy, education is not considered as an end, but as a means. The work of regeneration must lead to a deed of emancipation. Popular instruction must be among the most active elements of nationality. The Italian people must be raised to the dignity of rational beings, that they may be fairly entitled to claim their rights as an independent race of freemen. Education, we have said it, must be the beginning of a fundamental revolution.

This, both the governments and the patriots were well aware of: hence the want was universally felt in Italy of withdrawing and emancipating, as far as could be practicable, popular education from civil as well as from ecclesiastical authority; hence also the alarm had been spread among the rulers of the land, who, perceiving the hostile tendency of the age, either hoped to counteract the revolutionary influence of education, by taking it under their own immediate patronage or submitting it to priestly rule, as it was and is still done under the Austrian and Sardinian governments; or otherwise by waging a relentless war against its promoters and abettors, as Pope Gregory, the Duke of Modena, and others, have done.

The efforts of the moderate patriots for the spread of popular education, under the very grievous circumstances they had hitherto to contend with, is the best proof of their competence to judge of the means to provide for the wants of the country.

Wherever government did not openly declare against them; wherever prelates of the highest rank, such as the Archbishop of Turin, did not appeal to the worst feelings of popular fanaticism, to frustrate their endeavours, the friends of education have attained signal success. In Tuscany, at least, were it only as charitable institutions, schools for the poor could always rely on the support and favour of that benevolent population.

It must not be forgotten that the North of Italy, and especially Lombardy and Tuscany, have always taken the lead, and are even now unsurpassed in Europe, for their true Christian charity and benevolence, and that nowhere are hospitals, poor-houses, and orphan asylums, objects of a more assiduous and inexhaustible liberality.

As a house of charity, the popular school in Italy will be aided by the cooperation even of those who might be less sanguine as to the moral results attainable from a diffusion of knowledge among the lower orders, and less

disposed to lay too implicit a belief in the indefinite perfectibility of their fellow-beings. Whoever visited the infant asylums in Tuscany, the only province where government hitherto awarded them at least a negative patronage, however sceptically inclined as to the future prospects of the rising Italian generation, will at least applaud the immediate palpable advantages resulting from those truly maternal establishments*.

As you survey those little innocent creatures, the chil-

* I am too happy to bring fresh evidence in support of my views of Italian benevolence, by quoting the words of the best and greatest among the recent visitors of Italy:—

"Now, gentlemen," said Mr. Cobden, in his last address to the Manchester Athenæum, "now, gentlemen, in the most interesting country—interesting to us all—and with which we are identified in our habits and in our literature—I mean Italy—I find there a new life springing up; and when I inquired how it was that Italy began to make itself heard and felt in the rest of Europe, I came to the conclusion, from all that I could observe, that it arose from a quiet progress of thought and of intelligence, arising out of the education of the people. There have been, in Italy, great efforts made for the education of the people. I found to my astonishment, in almost every town—even towns of 15,000 or 20,000 inhabitants—several infant schools supported by voluntary contributions, superintended by Italian nobles. I saw a school at Turin where a marquis attends daily, and rides on a rocking-horse with the children, and joins them in their play. And to his honour I will mention him, for he cannot be ashamed to own you all—the Marquis D'Azeglio, brother to him whose writings you have seen on the present state of Italy. Then you have in Italy now, as you always had, leading minds—great individualities in every town—striking men, who have been engaged in writing and treating on every question of social importance. You have, in every town in Italy, men who are taking a deep interest, not only in schools, but in prison discipline, and in every question relating to the moral condition of the people. As regards political economy, I was amazed at the number of persons that I found in Italy who have a sympathy with our practical efforts and controversies on the subject of political economy. (Hear.) Every lawyer, every counsellor in Italy, studies political economy as a part of his education; and hence arises the great interest that was taken on the subject in which we have been so long and so arduously engaged in England."

dren of sin and misery, but recently rescued from the squalor and wretchedness of their parental roofs, still bearing on their haggard and emaciated features, and on their rickety limbs, the marks of hereditary disease and deformity, you bethink yourself of Alfieri, and wonder what curse of Heaven may have thus nipped and blasted the "plant man," in that most genial soil, and you offer your prayers to God that he may smile on the labours of the new cultivators and bear them up against the hatred and malignity of their opponents.

In the number of these latter, only three years ago, very nearly the whole of the Italian priesthood were enlisted. Gregory XVI. not only opposed reasons to arguments, sermons and homilies against pamphlets and journals; not only had he recourse to excommunications and banishments, but, whenever an opportunity presented itself, he did not hesitate to throw a schoolmaster into the dungeons of the castle of St. Angelo.

Among the most ardent promoters of the cause of popular education was a man hardly less known in England, in Germany, in Switzerland, than in his own country, as well for eminent talents, as for upright, generous character—a native of Wurtemburg, I believe, but by choice no less than by education, an Italian—Enrico Mayer, of Leghorn.

He had travelled all over Europe, and published the results of his observations in a series of papers, entitled "Fragments of a Pedagogical Journey," intended to give a very satisfactory account of the state of popular education in every European community. These papers made their appearance in the "*Guida dell' Educatore*," a periodical work of great usefulness, conducted by the Abate Raffaello Lambruschini, an evangelical, as well as a Catholic priest —and with the cooperation of Pietro Thonar, Niccolo Tommaseo, but most especially of the same indefatigable Enrico Mayer.

Besides his zeal in this sacred cause, and a manly but

fair and open opposition to the *Lotto*, and other popular abuses most immediately tending to undermine the morals of the lower orders, Mayer was too well known to have given no reason of offence.

Early in the month of May, 1840, Signor Mayer applied for, and obtained from his native Tuscan government, a passport for Naples and Sicily, the only part of Italy that the pedagogical traveller had never visited. In that epoch, it will be remembered, the differences between his Sicilian majesty and Great Britain had created a universal ferment in Italy; for such was then the state of that unhappy country, that every prospect of hostilities, every anticipation of anxieties and difficulties, in which their governments might be involved was hailed as an object of rejoicing, as a chance of resurrection on the part of the people. *Mors tua, vita mea*, was the mutual bond of union and love between the two opposite elements of social order, power, and opinion. Consequently, the Neapolitan consul at Leghorn refused to sanction, by his signature the passport of M. Mayer. This gentleman was therefore compelled to undertake an unnecessary journey to Florence, where he obtained from the Neapolitan minister what he had in vain applied for to his Excellency's subaltern. Provided thus with a passport in due form, M. Mayer started, by land, towards the south, and by a direct road proceeded to Rome. Here another Neapolitan ambassador countermanded the order of his colleague at Florence, and M. Mayer was once more stopped short in his journey. He humbly and resignedly protested against this abuse of power, and prolonged his stay in Rome, hoping by his remonstrances to soften the unjust rigour of the ambassador. One morning as he, according to his wont, applied to the Post Office for his letters, he was attacked by the *sbirri* of his Holiness, and thrown into prison, while his domicile underwent the most severe and minute investigation. For more than four months he was kept in the closest confine-

ment; he and his friends were left in a state of utter incertitude as to his fate. But the clamour raised by so arbitrary a measure, against so popular and irreprehensible a personage, was so very loud and incessant, that even the Pope's inflexibility was not proof against it. The dark and mysterious proceedings were broken short, and the prisoner was, at the request of the Grand Duke, sent back, under an armed escort, to the Tuscan confines; sentence of perpetual banishment from the ecclesiastical states was, however, issued against him, and enforced by threats of hard imprisonment and the galleys:—all this before he could receive the slightest information as to the crime he stood accused of. His innocence, even of that crime which long abuse of power had made most popular in Italy—political conspiracy—was so well established, that it seemed impossible to account for his misfortune, unless by supposing that the Pope, like the Athenian who voted for the ostracism of Aristides, was weary of hearing him spoken of as the most virtuous of men.

Such was the order of things in Italy up to a very late period. The proscription Mayer had suffered at Rome, equally closed the Sardinian, Austrian, and all other Italian frontiers, out of his native state, against him. As late as in the year 1845, he had in vain applied for his passport to Genoa.

The friends of popular education are now at liberty to pursue their beneficent course under better auspices, in three, at least, of the Italian states. The governments there have also been induced to take the subject into consideration, and to make education a matter for legislative deliberation.

Such a resolution, on their part, will have great weight in the furtherance of the cause. The Italians have too long been trained to look to their rulers for the accomplishment of all private or public enterprise. Indeed these latter have invariably seized upon and appropriated to

themselves every work, project, or discovery that gave any promise of honour or emolument. The state must needs stand godfather to the offspring of the citizen's ingenuity, industry, and charity, or else smother it at its birth.

Now, if there is any matter on which government may and ought to exercise a salutary control, it is, without contradiction, popular education. It were vain to expect that men may all be made good without a certain degree of coercion. Preventive laws should be as strictly binding to the citizen as penal laws. It is no less a duty of an enlightened state to provide the means of instruction than to enforce it. Educational systems should, indeed, be made consistent with the religious and moral liberties of the citizen. But the latter should be held responsible for the training of his children, either agreeably to the methods laid out and approved of by the State, or according to any other plans equally consonant with the spirit of the law.

A judicious extension and reformation of the universities, such as originally conceived in Italy, might, we believe, afford the means for an efficient and liberal centralisation of popular instruction. Education must be equally promoted by private exertions, and by public provision. It requires the very best understanding, the most earnest cooperation and emulation between a well-meaning government and the most enlightened and benevolent subjects. The school in Italy, especially in the country, must for a length of time clash with the domestic habits and interests of the people. The Italian peasantry are, in the abstract, less averse to knowledge than the generality of people of the same class elsewhere. They cannot, however, spare their children. From the age of five or six the labourer's son enters upon the discharge of petty but indispensable duties. He has his father's sheep, or his pigs, or his geese to follow to the pasture. During all the fine season —and this lasts throughout the twelvemonth in many a district—the father has constant occasion for his children's

assistance. The women themselves are pressed into service; and could the attendance of the rising generation even be dispensed with for an hour, they would be hopelessly fagged and worn out for mental exertion.

We have a signal instance of this near home. It was greatly to the credit of the Italians residing in England, that they provided the means of free education for the unhappy boys allured by unprincipled knaves to a life of squalor and vagrancy in the streets of London. Placed in similar circumstances, the French organised a "Société de Bienfaisance;" the Germans founded an hospital; the Italians alone opened a school. No effort—no sacrifice was spared to establish it on a footing which might extend its usefulness to all needy applicants; all opposition on the part of the boys' masters, on the part of the false priests of the Sardinian chapel, were gradually overcome. Public and private sympathies were enlisted in its behalf. The school is now grounded on a basis which leaves no uneasiness as to its durability. The number of pupils, only, does not answer the expectation of its most sanguine advocates; or, at least, we look in vain for the attendance of those mendicants for whose benefit the school was originally intended: a few of the children of poor Italian mechanics alone derive signal benefit from the institution of Greville Street; but the great mass of organ-grinders and plaster-cast vendors are too utterly stupified by toil throughout a long day to show any inclination, or, indeed, any aptitude, for reading and writing in the evening.

Even of such as have faith and good-will enough to come to their master's bidding, not many have power to struggle against the fatigue and torpor that overpowers them.

It is against such difficulties especially that infant and elementary schools will have to contend in Italy, especially in agricultural districts. To afford instruction utterly free of expense will not prove sufficient. It will be no less ne-

cessary to feed and clothe the poor children that are to be rescued from the unfeeling neglect of their parents, nor will it be easy to do away with the importunity of these latter, asking to be indemnified for the loss of their children, whose services they will actually be at a loss how to dispense with.

But the Italians of the higher classes are also in need of moral and physical education; and this must be more immediately the result of their own free will. The whole of that noble Greco-Latin race is degenerate and dwindled. The Italians, no longer held up by the inspiriting contests of public life, have given way before the enervating influence of their southern climate. With the exception of some mountain district, manliness is nowhere to be found. The athletic exercises in which the youth of the Lombard and Tuscan cities were known to delight, the games of the *Pallone, Trucco,* &c., have either fallen into disuse from sheer apathy and indolence, or have been forcibly discontinued. The battles on the bridges at Pisa, the fencing-schools and shooting-galleries in Lombardy, have been put an end to by the edict of a quiet-loving police. Country sports can do no great good where country residence is out of fashion; and, out of a hundred gentlemen who can afford the luxury of a horse, not two in Italy are equal to the exertion of mounting it.

A thorough revolution must take place in this respect; and this not merely because the Italians may at some future period be called upon to take the field against their foreign enemy; when to find a home in the saddle, and to know on what side a musket should be fired, may be of some importance; but also because there can be no true mental fortitude without a corresponding amount of bodily strength; and because much of the weakness and pusillanimity, with which the Italian people are too often charged—to which foreign writers too readily attribute the continued enslavement of their country, and which certainly breathe

forth from the overwrought sensitiveness and maudlin piety especially exhibited in the works of the Romantic school of Manzoni and Pellico—is the result of that physical exhaustion, of that languor and sickliness, which has made the over-civilised Italians less than men and less than women.

The Italian climate has too long been called to account for the wilful prostration of a degraded race. It is, no doubt, a formidable adversary; but it is always in the power of man to turn it into the most useful auxiliary.

Like all sublunar evils, it must be resisted, wrestled with. The energies which are called forth in its subjugation may afterwards be directed to any other achievement. By conquering their climate, the Italians triumph over themselves; and for what arduous enterprise does not self-victory smooth the way?

CHAPTER IX.

ANNA PEPOLI.

Italian Women—Countess Pepoli—Female Education—in America—in England—in Italy—Domestic Life in Italy—Characteristic Virtues of Italian Women.

WOMAN is invariably such as man wishes her to be. Her mind and heart are moulded according to the ideas prevailing in the society in which she is brought up; and by a natural reaction she exercises an equal ascendancy over society itself. She is a daughter and a mother; consequently is she, by turns, a pupil and a mistress: consequently her sex may always be taken as a fair representative of the moral standard reached by the human family in all ages and countries.

For our observations on the important subject of Italian women, we will refer to the pages of an amiable lady—now no more—who, in a work intended to illustrate the domestic and social virtues, which ought to characterise "a wise and amiable woman,"* has given as thorough an insight into Italian manners in this respect, as our own recollections or inquiries could, by any possibility, enable us to afford.

Anna, Countess Pepoli, and widow of the Marquis Sampieri, belonged, by birth, to one of the most ancient and

* "La Donna Saggia ed Amabile." Libri tre di Anna Pepoli, Vedova, Sampieri, Capolago. Tipografia Elvetica. 1838.

illustrious historical families of Bologna. Her brother, Count Carlo Pepoli, already well known to the republic of letters, was long an exile from his native country and resided, till very late, in London.

The Countess Anna had been a wife and a mother, and it was only after her having performed her uxorial and maternal duties in a manner that won her the admiration and esteem of all who knew her, after having trusted to another the happiness of the only daughter, whom she had brought up with all the solicitude of love, that she endeavoured to draw up a theory of those countless and nameless cares by which woman can make a heaven of a husband's home, and indemnify the world for the unavoidable, however remote, contingency of her loss, by leaving behind her what has been not unaptly called "a second edition of self."

But besides her desire of communicating to her countrywomen all that her own experience had taught her respecting the duties of woman as a housekeeper or (reggitrice), as an instructress (educatrice), and as a social being (donna conversevole), the Countess harboured in her bosom a higher object, common in Italy to every person who thinks or feels no less than to all who write, that of vindicating the women of Italy "from the unjust judgment" and "false accusations" brought against them by partial or prejudiced foreigners; the *rehabilitation* of the national character being the aim of the most anxious endeavours of every generous soul that lives between the Alps and the sea.

Certainly this plea in favour of the national character was neither uncalled for nor inopportune; for the Italians wrote comparatively little, and that little must undergo the ordeal of a most odious censorship, which scrupled not to proscribe even the most harmless book, under no other pretext than that it bore the obnoxious name of Italy and Italians; so that even the work we have now before us, holy and pure as its subject might appear to us, and meek,

gentle, and moderate the spirit in which it was dictated, could, however, only be printed at Capolago, in Switzerland, and on its first appearance in the Papal States was put to the Index, seized upon, and subjected its authoress to endless petty annoyances and vexations on the part of his Holiness's government.

That the character of the Italians has been wilfully misrepresented by ignorant travellers, who have hurried through the country under the influence of illiberal prepossessions, is a fact sufficiently demonstrated by the more mature and rational reports of other visitors, who had leisure to ground their estimate on a closer observation and a more intimate acquaintance. We do not believe that those writers have any wish or interest to be unjust to other nations, but the poor honest Milanese, or light-hearted Florentine, who happens to read a smuggled French or English newspaper, or a stray volume of a novel where it is unblushingly stated that "every man is there a swindler, every woman a wanton," must be sympathised with, if taking such compliments literally, and supposing such uncharitable animadversions to be implicitly relied upon abroad, he feels sore and bitter on the subject, and considers himself bound to seize every opportunity to stand forth as his country's sworn champion and advocate.

In proportion, therefore, as our authoress succeeds in demonstrating how far her countrywomen have attained a high degree of feminine excellence, so shall we feel inclined to judge more or less favourably of the morals of the nation at large; and every proof she may be able to bring forward in support of her subject will have the force of a hundred arguments in refutation of the charges brought against the Italian name.

Meanwhile, since men are willing in our days to lay so great a stress on the philosophy of language, we deem it worth our while to study the sex in a country, whose tongue has no such word as *woman*, the only analogous ap-

pellation being "*Donna*" a corruption of the Latin *Domina* or *Domna* (lady) which is still equally applicable to a female of the lowest order, to the proudest matrons in the land, and even to the worshipped "Queen of the Angels."

The work of our authoress seems from its very beginning calculated to overthrow our long-cherished ideas of Italian female education. No mention of convents is made. That strict rule of monastic seclusion to which every young lady of high rank was almost universally supposed to be condemned in Catholic countries, there to be walled up in a narrow cell, only to pass from the silence and solitude of the cloisters to the glare and bustle of the wide world, affianced to a husband, whose very portrait she had never seen, we know that many of our readers will be astonished and scandalised to hear it—is neither better nor worse than one of the thousand and one absurd fables by which Italian life is rather romantically than veritably represented.

Countess Pepoli does not inquire into the good or evil effects of monastic education. She does not advocate or inveigh against the system. She seems not even to suspect, to dream of its existence; belonging by birth to and moving all her life among the highest circles, she knows very well that neither herself nor her daughter, nor any of her friends, at least since the days of Napoleon, ever set their foot within the precincts of a nunnery, except only those few unfortunate or perhaps deluded ones, who, either through disappointment, or dread of the world, or misunderstood devotion, are still occasionally induced to leave all their worldly hopes and anxieties with their shorn hair on its threshold.

The convent in our days—hear it, ye gallant and compassionate champions, whose chivalrous feelings are so deeply affected as you roam around the inclosure of an Ursuline monastery, and whose imagination loves to conjure up images of loveliness as crowding those harems of

the Brides of Christ—the convent has become the refuge of shrivelled old women, and of those ill-favoured creatures who are wedded to heaven in sheer despair of more substantial nuptials. Those confirmed old spinsters, whom the provident English match-maker ships off by the score to India, and the American packs off to the needy marts of the far west, the Italian parent easily persuades to cloistral retirement. All the power of a first-rate nobleman could not in feudal times (witness Manzoni) immure a reluctant girl in the cloisters without having recourse to the basest shifts of domestic policy; but, in our days, after the abolition of the rights of primogeniture and the consequent dismemberment of the oldest families, parents have no longer an object, even if they had the power, to sacrifice their offspring, either by violence or deceit.

But, if the system of conventual education may be considered as utterly exploded, it cannot be denied that her mother's home has not unfrequently for an Italian young lady all the sameness and loneliness of monastic seclusion.

Female delicacy in Italy is looked upon as a pure crystal which the faintest breath of the world may contaminate. It is a sweet, tender flower, equally dreading the scorching meridian ray and the blast of the northern gale. The Italians believe in a virginity of the soul, without which personal chastity has hardly any value in their eyes. To secure this moral innocence—and this may be a grievous error in a civilised age—they know no better means than an almost entire abstraction from, and ignorance of, the world.

The independence of the Yankee girl begins at the earliest stage of boarding-school life—with the choice of her books, of her dancing-master, of her congregation, of her minister. She makes no mystery of her predilection for her teacher, because he is "a spruce, good-looking fellow;" for her preacher, because he has "such very white hands." She subscribes to cotillon parties, shines off at fancy fairs, tasks the purse-gallantry of her

admirers at flower auctions. She walks home late at night from her routs, arm-in-arm with her favourite partner, by moonlight, on the shady side of the road. She steams off up the Hudson, down the Ohio, and comes back none the worse for the exercise and excitement. Not the slightest shade of uneasiness, at home, on account of her protracted absence. She introduces a "travelling friend" to the old lady, who sits down to make tea for him; finally, she coolly informs her parents that she has been "popped at," and that "her mind is made up," unless, indeed, she prefers the fuss and *éclat* of a runaway match.

It is but justice to say, however, that this unbounded latitude is seldom, if ever, attended with mischievous results. Thanks, perhaps, to natural coldness of temperament, to premature experience, or to the popularity of marriage in those wide-spreading settlements, the American young lady is seldom at a loss for a well-intentioned suitor. She very early acquires the calculating habits of the country. She is her own Duenna and Chaperon. She learns to value her admirers according to their *worth*. Her fancy and heart are always under the control of reason. Romance is all very well in books, but marriage is a matter of prose. A *faux pas* is seldom heard of, or, if ever, all worldly advantages have been duly weighed, and even that apparent imprudence is the result of the most consummate policy. Nowhere are most absurdly disproportionate matches more universally the order of the day. Nowhere is Mammon more invariably the torch-bearer of Hymen than amongst these very damsels whose choice is so utterly free from parental control.

Before she leaves school, a Yankee girl—God bless her!—has a thorough knowledge of the world. Else what were the good of the million of novels she feasts upon? Her look is proud and daring; her step firm and secure. Modesty she scorns as want of sincerity and frankness; delicacy she spurns as lack of proper spirit and independ-

ence. With the exception of a few luckless words, excluded from the English dictionary by an over-nice notion of prudery—for a list of them *vide* Sam Slick—there is hardly a subject of conversation she would dream of rebuking or discountenancing.

By this early training is she fitted for every department of public life: ready to enter the lists as an orator, an agitator, a journalist. The wide world is the stage she acts on. The drudgery of housekeeping devolves on the mercenary landlady of a Broadway boarding-house. Man fags himself into a dyspepsia at his counter: woman reads, flirts, and gives herself airs in all the luxuries of a hired drawing-room. So much for Eve's share of the common lot of mortals.

In presence of her betrothed or husband, she launches forth in the most transcendent expressions of admiration of the eagle eyes or bushy whiskers of her outlandish visitor; no matter if she be overheard by the very object of her enthusiastic rhapsodies. Her husband bargained for her hand and person; but her fancy is free as the air she breathes. Secure in her tangible virtue, she courts temptation for the sake of its bracing effects. She is a coquette upon principle, and indulges in wanton, but unmeaning, flirtations, merely to test the endurance of the man of her choice. With this view she draws the period of her betrothment to a prodigious length—that being the zenith of a social ascendancy, with which maternal duties may, in spite of herself, interfere in after-life.

Having still a queen at the head of their nation, as well as a national church and aristocracy, the English cannot boast of going the whole length of American freedom. Girls, in this country, are made, sometimes, to remember that they *have* a mother. If not absolutely under the control, they are still, at least, under the guidance, of their natural guardians. They have got eyes, and are permitted to use them; a taste, and they are free to exercise it; a heart,

and they are allowed to believe that it is theirs to bestow. Truly, however, this liberty exists rather in words than facts. The tether is long and loose, but never entirely slips from the governor's hands. A daughter has the motion of her own marriage-bill, but the parents reserve the enactment for themselves. They do not control their child's inclinations, but reason her out of them; they do not crush her feelings, even though they may tamper with them; they do not thwart her love, but endeavour to awaken her ambition; they do not present her the alternative between an old husband and a convent. God forbid! They only bid her choose between a young guardsman and a coronet. She has, at least, a voice in the family council, an all but casting voice; like a member of the jury, she may be persuaded, coaxed, or even starved into compliance, but cannot be disposed of without her consent.

Should any of the blooming maidens of England complain of unfairness and shuffling in this gentle exercise of paternal authority, they may derive ample consolation by comparing their lot, I will not say with the bondswomen of an Eastern household, but with the gifted daughters of other races.

An Italian mother—we speak of ladies of the old school, for there also the innovating spirit of the age has been busily at work—can be contented with nothing short of making herself the gaoler of her child. The poor girl must grow up in her mother's bower, like a sweet rose-bud, hidden beneath a bush of thorns, like a gem buried in the depths of ocean. She is never lost sight of for a moment, never lent to an old aunt or grandmother, even for the benefit of her health. Home is to her the only wholesome atmosphere. Boarding-schools and finishing academies are all but unknown in Italy. Education ends where it begins; in the nursery. The girl opens no book, sees no living being, without her guardian's knowledge. Are visitors announced? she is bidden to withdraw. Is

mamma going to the opera? she is ordered to bed. The slighest outburst of feeling or enthusiasm is visited with a frown. Every thing is studied to guard her against sudden impressions. Her friends are in a constant dread of her southern susceptibility. Her heart is a little volcano, causing them endless anxiety. All her mother is able to teach, the girl must learn from her. If other instructors are absolutely required, female are always preferred to male teachers, old to young. In all cases the mother is in constant attendance. The schooling, indeed, with the exception of music, is neither vast nor deep, a little blissful ignorance being deemed much safer than the least chance of a *liaison dangereuse*. All this, not only lest the silly, inexperienced young thing should ever take it into her head to set off one fair morning with her dancing-master, bound on what is here called "a walk to Kensington Gardens"—for Gretna Green is a long way from Italy—but in order to guard her from the most passing temptation to that effect.

The greatest pride of a matron's heart consists in offering her daughter to her chosen lord as perfectly new to all tender sensations as the babe unborn. The intended husband is almost the first man with whom the girl is brought into close intimacy. Her little heart is a blank, upon which every image can be, with equal facility, engraved. She has no dangerous comparisons before her eyes. She has none of the knowing airs of a *belle* of six London seasons; none of that keen intuitive perception, which enables an Almack's beauty to discern, at the first approach, the substantiality of an *eligible* from the inanity of a mere *detrimental*. (For the technicalities of this elegant style we are indebted to the bright authoress of "Mothers and Daughters.") The all-engrossing topics of "*trousseau* and pin-money" have never been discussed within her hearing. Her hitherto vague feelings have gained in intensity what they have lost in extent and variety: they are

easily transferred from her piping bulfinch or her gold-fish to one or the other of the few young cavaliers, with whom her father, in due time, purposely suffers her to make herself familiar. Her provident parent's choice becomes instinctively her own.

The Italian, it is evident, deals not with woman as a free rational being. Some of the old Pagan and Mahometan doubts respecting the immateriality of her soul may, possibly, still be lurking among the denizens of that classical land. A damsel so imprisoned must be hardly prepared for the duties of a bride and matron's life; she must labour under a vague longing for that career of display and conquest, of coquetry and popularity, from which she was debarred in the proper season; she must find herself besieged with vague apprehensions, and also encompassed with real dangers, which a previous initiation into the world and its ways might gradually have enabled her to steer through with perfect safety.

It appears, therefore, that the English act, in this, as almost in all matters, on the "*medio tutissimus* principle." Their genteel *Establishments* at Clapham Common or Turnham Green are a something between the beleaguered nursery of an Italian *palazzo* and the roysterous lecture-room of a female university at Troy and Albany. Her long and lank governess, a cross between a guardian-angel and a dragon, encircles an English girl round and round—a faint, but omnipresent emanation of maternal authority. Her presentation at sweet seventeen is a formal, yet ambiguous, acknowledgment of her claims as a self-dependent, but accountable, agent. Finally, as we have seen, in her all-important choice of a state, she is admitted, a voting member, in the deliberations of the family circle. Her inclinations and interests are weighed in her presence. Her sense has been carefully trained to a due estimate of the good things of this world. She has a keen perception of the useful, as well as the ornamental; still, if she allows

herself to be led astray by perverseness of taste, why, her mother's curse and her father's testamentary shilling be the portion of the undutiful child.

Liberty for woman, no less than for man, is a blessing proportionate to the wisdom which fits her for its enjoyment. The Turkish maiden, fattening in her father's coops for the benefit of an unknown bridegroom, the Italian damsel, stooping for hours and hours on her embroidery frame, know but little of the heart-burnings of the English portionless daughter on her husband-catching career. Freedom of choice may ultimately lead to lasting felicity, but the process itself is fraught with perils and anxieties, for which the luckiest hit can hardly be a condign compensation.

On the whole, perhaps, the question resolves itself into the estimate that different nations make of the peculiar charms of female loveliness. The Spartans, certainly, did not bring up their wrestling hoydens with a view to the preservation of their brilliancy of complexion, or roundness of forms. In the same manner, the Americans, and, to a certain extent, the English, do not, like the Italians, attach the utmost importance to that modesty, which is the result of awkward timidity, or to that native purity of heart, which has its safeguard in ignorance of evil. Shrinking diffidence and unaffected coyness, which southern nations cherish as the instinctive graces of the sex, would be but a poor recommendation in countries, where the high-born damsel breaks in her tenant's horses, and the coroneted lady coaxes or bullies her tradesman into an unconscientious vote.

Experience shows us how far a discreet, intelligent, Italian mother can make her prison-home a perfect elysium to her child. All alive to her apprehensions of the natural combustibility of her daughter's young blood, ever on her guard against all chances of its sudden ignition, she exercises over her a guardianship of confidence and sympathy.

The girl must feel that she is never left alone, not because she is mistrusted, but because her mother loves her too well to spare her company. She is not bidden to stifle every vague feeling that may spring up in her bosom, but she is taught to let her best friend in its secret. She is, in fact, to be a prisoner, not by the agency of bolts and bars, but only by that indefinable awe and misgiving which make her dread liberty as inconsistent with happiness and security. In the same manner we have seen a well-trained canary bird, stopping on the unclosed door of its golden cage, as if afraid of the dreariness of the open air, and loath to quit the comforts of its love-nurtured captivity.

Thus, we think, it would prove rather amusing to see with what warmth and earnestness our fair authoress admonishes every loving mother to keep a sharp look out, and trust no person—"e sia oculata e diffidi di tutti; di tutti"—adding, however, that she must so contrive that her mistrust and suspicion be never perceived; with what rigidity she proscribes novels and all other writings calculated to pervert a young mind by amorous extravagances—"non concedere alla figliuola la lettura d'ogni romanzo o d'altri libri che pervertono l'imaginazione con amorosi vaneggiamenti"—alluding especially to "those pestiferous works of fiction, which late in the eighteenth and during the present century are sent by hundreds from 'oltremonti ed oltremare' to pervert Italian manners, already so deplorably corrupted;" exception being made only in favour of those "stupendous creations" of Walter Scott and a few others in that style, which the countess expressly and strenuously advocates. These cares and solicitudes redouble when "the girl has reached that age in which duty and expediency equally demand that she should be produced into society." Then, indeed, must the mother beware of every living being, "not excepting even her best friends, especially female friends;" she must, we are taught, "keep close to her daughter," and at every rout or ball be sure that her

eye constantly watches all her movements, "nothing being more shocking than to see a girl dancing or waltzing in one room, whilst the mother sits down at her rubber in another."

Southern delicacy and susceptibility, jealousy and suspiciousness, seem to delight in crowding the social world with myriads of phantoms and monsters, from which an unsophisticated heart, even if it escape without serious hurt, may, perhaps, not come off without some of those slight scratches and bruises, which—as a woman is vaguely understood to love only once and that for life—may be left to smart and bleed for an incalculable length of time. In short, a girl in her teens is not, in the south, thought to be possessed of sufficient discernment to guard her against the suddenness and impetuosity of her own inclinations, and as these may fatally be found to be at variance with the views her best friends entertain as to her worldly preferment, her mother's arms are to be wound around her so as to shield her against all untoward impressions, which, by rousing unjustifiable expectations, may lead to nothing but disappointment and misery.

A strong *sense of duty* in England, and a *calculating spirit* in America, may, no doubt, induce an Anglo-Saxon maiden to acquiesce in her parents' dispositions as efficiently as the most rigid and untiring chaperonship; but, whilst in these lands the parent limits himself to provide his offspring with fit weapons to spurn and overcome seduction, the more wary Italian secures her against the dangers of temptation, and spares her the pangs of a struggle.

But does, then, so essentially domestic an education necessarily engender domestic habits and tastes? Does so utter a novice in the world's ways always faithfully cling to her husband for advice and support? And does the sense of her utter helplessness contribute to increase her deference and affection for him? And is an Italian the best of wives?

The sneering curl of your upper lip, malicious reader, is a more than sufficient answer. For fame has told long tales of the dark ladies of Italy, of the naughty tricks of their unblushing cicisbeism, and other sweeping conclusions against their *universal* propensities to gallantry, till the blood of one who had a mother and still has sisters in that country, whose memory is hallowed in the depth of his heart, must tingle in every vein. Notwithstanding the Anglo-maniac predilections which would prompt us to award the palm of holiness to the fair daughters of this island, we may, therefore, be expected to deal with more charity towards those it cost us so unutterable a pang to part with.

The people of Italy seem, certainly, to be well acquainted with the peculiar qualities in which their wives and daughters excel. *Donna Tedesca*, says their quaint old proverb, *buona per la casa; Donna Francese buona per la conversazione;* and after thus yielding to women of the Teutonic races the superiority in the management of their household, to the Parisian ladies the charm of conversational powers, they conclude—*Donna Italiana buona per gli affetti;* usurping thus for their own partners the privilege of a more tender sensibility and ardent soul.

As an adviser to her husband in the management of his estates, as an entertainer of his political friends at a county dinner, as *dame de comptoir* to a French shopkeeper—in short, as a helpmate in the general sense of the word, the Italian bride will be found sadly deficient. Her worldly education begins on her wedding-day, and devolves altogether on her husband; but as a fond, faithful companion, brought up so primitively as she is, and created with deep, inexhaustible treasures of affection, if she does not transcend her husband's most sanguine expectations, he alone is to blame.

We have all read of that philosopher who entered into

a marriage-contract with a mere child, with a view to train her up after his own mind and heart, and to win her affections from their earliest development. He did not calculate on the disproportion of age and the filial familiarity precluding the possibility of any tenderer intimacy; but would he have suffered equal disappointment, had his bride elect been only in mind a child, but endowed with teeming faculties and warm feelings, whose expansion and maturity only needed the Promethean spark of conjugal love? Such an overgrown child does an Italian often find in his *cara sposa*.

And after all, even in England, how much of a girl's schooling goes towards fitting her up for her matronly duties? Which of her French, German, or even "English branches," has a tendency to form the character of the future mother of a family? A knowledge of the world is, surely, acquired at a boarding school; and the fashionable novels or the police reports afford her a sufficient insight of human life, if she is debarred from the improving intercourse of more *knowing* class-mates at the academy. But is her discernment, her moral sense, cultivated in proportion? Is her education as extensive as her multifarious instruction?

But, we repeat, innocence in an Englishwoman is not a merely negative attribute. Her virtue must rest on a loftier basis. Her scornful loathing of vice must arise from an intimate knowledge of its hideousness. Her command over her passions must proceed from a natural calmness of temperament; from an early development of her reasoning powers; from an elaborate discrimination of good and evil. She must invert the saying of the ancient heroine—

"Video deteriora—meliora sequor,"

must be her watchword through life. Nothing must be

left to mere instinct. She is a responsible being, and as such can she be hoped to steer safely through life without a chart of its breakers and shoals?

Viewed from this point, the timid, bashful, sensitive, Italian bride is but a poor specimen of wively dignity. But she is calculated for the condition that awaits her. As a creature of passion she is equally susceptible of being led to the extremes of good and evil. Her husband has her entirely under his control.

Unfortunately the Italians are said to make the best lovers, but the most indifferent husbands. An Italian is jealous as long as he loves. His disposition is selfish and exclusive. It must absorb all the faculties of the woman he sets his heart upon. He will shoot her favourite spaniel on his wedding-day. He is a self-tormenting domestic tyrant, whom nothing short of a desert island could free from anxiety.

Happily his partner is trained up to seclusion and solitude. She is fain to attribute her husband's suspiciousness and disquietude to excess of tenderness, and easily puts up with it. Indeed, she is rather alarmed at the first symptoms of remissness on the part of her gaoler. Sultana-like, she deems it an insult to be morally unveiled, by being left too freely in the keeping of an admiring stranger.

Happy even in her narrow limits of enjoyment, if this wonder-working love, this transcendent adhesiveness and inhabitiveness could endure for life! But affections are as short-lived as they are headlong and intense. The sameness and seclusion to which young couples in the egotism of their happiness improvidently condemn themselves, must have the effect of wasting, in a few weeks of honeymoon ebriety, the sober enjoyments of a whole life. Every chance, not only of domestic felicity, but even of sober, moral conduct in Italy, depends upon the degree of rationality with which the happy lovers resume their place

in society after that long entrancement of unearthly bliss. If all their store of affection has not been wantonly consumed among the extravagances of the bridal feast, if they can contrive to live thriftily on its remains—and we believe such is still the case with the majority of Italian families—all may yet be well: but, otherwise, the estrangement is as complete as the union was all-absorbing. A moral divorce ensues—legal separation being in that country prohibited both by divine and human laws, and by public opinion—a secret compact is entered into, according to the terms of which, husband and wife continue to inhabit the same house—not the same apartments, if they can help it—and to keep up the appearances of a quiet and orderly household, without, in fact, any but the most distant and formal friendship between them.

In this agreement the young wife, who has been hitherto suffered to see as little of the world as maternal caution and foresight could contrive, who has been taught to look upon herself as a mere dependence on her husband, finds herself suddenly the mistress of her own actions, and launched into the midst of a society, every element of which seems most fatally calculated to determine her ruin.

Discretion, in England, seems to be the best part of affection, as it is of valour. A little love goes far with a rational couple. A husband soon learns to rely on the prudence of his mild, undemonstrative wife. He trusts her. He knows that chastity is the best policy for a woman as honesty for a man. Her intellectual acquirements make her an agreeable, at any rate, a useful companion. He seeks with her in society the diversion which *tête-à-tête* monotony would no longer afford. His wife is at home in the world; has long been up to all its treacherous devices; proof against its flatteries and seductions.

Society in England (and we take this country as a standard of morality in all the northern countries, as we look

upon Italy as the representative of the south) is based on principles admirably calculated to promote order and encourage the respectability of wedded life.

Up to the period of the French Revolution, celibacy was, in Italy, the order of the day. The country was then swarming with numberless cadets, who, unable on account of their penniless condition to support a family, affected to number marriage among the burdens of heirship, and conspired to bring about that anomalous and yet misunderstood state of society, which, under the name of *cicisbeism*, has reflected, perhaps, as much ridicule as disgrace on their country, and which certainly gave them little reason to envy the rights and privileges of primogeniture.

Things have now undergone a rapid improvement. It is no longer unblushingly asserted that it is "only the fool that marries," nor is a husband any longer congratulated or thanked for his "devotion to the public weal." The code of *cicisbeism* has been abolished, if it ever existed—but notwithstanding the partition and equalisation of property arising from the abolition of the feudal laws—which had the splendid result of bringing the nation to a happy level of beggary—many are yet the Italian youths deterred from wedded life by sheer want, and celibacy, if it has ceased to be a thing of fashion, has become, to a fearful extent, a matter of necessity. Religious and political institutions also conspire to aggravate this most pernicious social disorder. Myriads of Catholic priests, bound by hasty vows, and thousands of officers either forbidden by law, or prevented by penury, from marrying, are let loose on a community in which the most sacred affections are for them criminal, in which feeling can only lead them to error, and love to libertinism.

Moreover, soldiers and priests, plebeians and nobles—all in Italy are idle. Idle, less perhaps from choice and habit than absolute necessity. Private exertion slackens without the stimulus of public activity; and southern life is

but too easily enticed, from sheer ennui into the unlawful but heart-stirring excitement of love-intrigue.

A Frenchwoman presiding over her husband's counting-house; an English peeress canvassing for her lord's party; a citizen's wife preparing her contributions for her tract society, may, perhaps, as a man, look upon her love romance merely as an episode in her life. For a woman of Italy it is existence itself; and in the shipwreck of her domestic affections she must be too fatally prone to cling to the first hand insidiously stretched forth to her in sympathy, and to transfer upon another all the treasure of tenderness so wantonly spurned and trampled upon by its legitimate owner.

It is also well to observe, that the estimate of Italian women has been grounded upon a few specimens of courtly nobility, a set of beings equally licentious in all countries. A middle rank of society is hardly yet formed in Italy, all the independent and polished part of the community being equally entitled to the fatal privilege of a corrupting idleness, whilst all its useful members belong to the people, amongst whom the standard of morality could be easily proved to be as high as elsewhere.

All these attenuating circumstances are not here brought forward in justification of woman's misconduct. By thus alluding to the state of society in Italy, we would not palliate guilt, but exalt virtue in proportion to the trials it has to undergo. The London merchant's wife, luxuriating in the magnificent loneliness of her drawing-room at Hackney or Camberwell, reading the last new novel, and indulging in fantastic but harmless dreams of fairy-land, deserves commendation, no doubt, if at the return of her husband with a set of dull, sleepy partners and brokers talking of nothing but Consols and railway shares—most of them married too, "wasps from whom the sting has been extracted," all of them prematurely grave and respectable—she has strength of mind sufficient to prevent her from looking up to any of those excellent men of business for

the realisation of her romantic visions, and comes to the conclusion that her own "old man" is worth the best of them; but she has hardly an idea of that militant virtue, which must stand the test of long, incessant temptation, and resist the contagious force of example.

A woman, in England, is, on an average, a more highly endowed, a more accomplished creature than the generality of the males she communes with; she looks down upon them; she chooses one of them for his sterling, substantial qualities, as a useful rather than an agreeable acquisition. All the ornamental part, all the charms of life, private or public, fall to her share; she expects her good man to work for, not to amuse her. But, in Italy, every man is a lady's man; with the exception of a little naïve talk, the Italian belle has hardly any social resource. Man must defray all the expenses of conversation. His acquirements, purely of a light, flashy character, make him dangerously attractive. Intellectual superiority, and an early practice in all the arts of seduction, give the southern libertine all the wily insidiousness of the serpent.

What is elsewhere only called a dutiful wife is, in Italy, a heroine; and it is because we firmly believe that the number of these heroines is great, far greater than foreign travellers are willing to acknowledge, greater even than the vain-talking Italians themselves seem inclined to suppose—that we have faith in them all; that we deem them far above their reputation, far above the condition of a country in which all social order has so long been rapidly verging into utter dissolution.

Against these dreaded agents of evil, an Italian woman has the shield of her religious and moral principles, the constant watchfulness of her husband and all around her, and the hundred-eyed vigilance of public scandal.

Religion in Italy is omnipresent; not a flimsy, lukewarm thing of Tracts and Evangelical Magazines, of weekly observances, and wrangling controversies; but that instinct-

ive, and, if we may so say, narrow-minded fear of God which shrinks from doubt and inquiry; that faint-hearted bigotry, that perpetual unrest of conscience, which if it does not always prevent, if it even compromises with sin, is, however, a safeguard against the utter hardening of the heart. Religion is considered as one of the best outward signs of feminine gentleness. The most daring sceptic, the most obdurate unbeliever in an Italian university, could not look without disgust on a female free-thinker. The "Vestiges of Creation" could not make their way into an Italian drawing-room, harmless though they may be; nor could people there believe in the existence of such a female as we have all seen travelling from town to town in America as a public preacher of infidelity.

Hence an Italian husband, whatever the bias of his own mind in relation to religious matters, is always fain to allow his wife and all the female part of his domestic community to follow the dictates of the church, to observe all its ceremonies and festivities, and even goes the whole length of allowing another man to search into those inmost recesses of his wife's heart, from which he himself, her paramount lord and master, no less than her truest friend and counsellor, is often excluded. Hence travellers have been surprised to see the Catholic churches on the Continent almost exclusively frequented by females, as if woman alone, in her meekness and gentleness, felt still the need of her Creator's protection; and, however modern philosophy may have thinned the confessional of one-half of its customers, it is still, and will long continue to be, knelt to by fair penitents.

But, were it even possible for an Italian woman to emancipate herself from God and her spiritual director, she would be restrained by other more material terrors. The jealousy of her husband survives his love; around the lady are a crowd of his allies—his mother, his sisters, a host of rigid dowagers and sour-tempered spinsters, be-

longing to his family, and warmly attached to his interests, who, on the first symptoms of estrangement, range themselves into a formidable array on his side, and volunteer their services as an active and sleepless domestic police.

Finally, it can only be a hopelessly abandoned woman who will brave the meddling, gossiping spirit prevailing in those petty Italian communities. The levities of an English commoner's wife, lost among the crowds of busy cities, may amount to the utmost profligacy ere they attract public attention. Likewise a gentle flirtation at a German Spa, or southern watering-place, is not likely to tell against the character of a wandering peeress on her return. But an Italian lady is acting all her life on the same stage and before the same audience; before a coterie of *male lingue*, always willing to comment on any momentary imprudence, and bring it forward as an argument in support of their disbelief in female virtue; never so happy as when they can exult over an angel's fall.

Before such a jury, it is evident, scarcely any wife's fame can long escape unsullied; and it is, however, upon the chronicles of such vulgar defamers that strangers form their estimate of the standard of woman in Italy. But the natives well know what value to set upon mere idle slander, and the perverse credulity that substantiates it; and as, owing especially to an imperfect legislation and the iniquity of a government always bent upon fostering vice, criminality of that nature is never brought to court and satisfactorily proved, the most irreprehensible classes never hesitate to discountenance imputations originating with base gossip-pickers, by their generous demeanour towards the traduced person, willing rather to run the chance of sheltering a real offender than suffer the innocent to be immolated.

A truly noble duchess, be it remembered, proceeded with an equally disdainful disregard of public opinion in this country, and her independent daring saved from unmerited

indignity a highly gifted and most probably much-injured being!

Allowance must be made for the inevitable misunderstandings of national antipathies. The French take their standard of Italian women from Catherine or Mary de Medici. What if the Italians were to judge Teutonic women from the patterns of Caroline of Naples, or Maria Louisa of Parma? Their foreign rulers, French or German, give the Italians the most glaring instances of depravity; and the immense majority of travellers are too apt to take it for granted that all is lawful in a lawless country.

Nothing is more conducive to error than to generalise upon individual observation. Why should Mrs. H—— or Mrs. C—— be exceptions amongst the English, and Teresa Confalonieri or the mother and wife of Attilio Bandiera be anomalies amongst Italian women? Till the day of their elopement and trial the former were not thought to be worse, till their husband's calamity the latter were not supposed to be better than the generality of their respective countrywomen. The temptation which led a respected mother or a dutiful daughter so shockingly to swerve from their duties, and the tragical catastrophe which called into exertion the unsuspected energies of young and timid minds, or broke hearts apparently engrossed with the frivolities of the gay world, are events of equally possible recurrence.

A very vain and self-sufficient English writer has said that it would be difficult to find an honest man in Italy for every forty in England. A bold and gratuitous assertion! Nor do we know on what statistics of probity it is grounded. But he adds soon after, that that one Italian is worth all the forty honest English together. All which only tends to demonstrate that human nature in Italy is equally susceptible of the highest moral excellence and of the utmost depravity. Again, it has been justly remarked, that no-

where are such startling specimens of human deformity, such horrid old hags, to be met with as among the lowest classes at Rome or Naples; but it has also been granted, that although the average standard of beauty may be said to be higher in England, yet such patterns of perfect female loveliness are occasionally found in Italy as are not to be seen in any Christian country of Europe.

In the like manner, and by that law of consistency which nature observes in all her works, we shall expect to see the extremes of moral beauty and ugliness as frequently brought into contact, and exhibiting as striking a character.

It is said with great justice, that the Italians are an eminently passionate people. This word, however, has not among them the same obnoxious meaning as it has with us. True to the Greek and Latin etymology, *passione* in Italian is synonymous with feeling. Passion is for them an indispensable element of life. It indifferently leads, think they, to the noblest exploits and to the darkest enormities. Hence they cherish and foster, even though they contrive to guide it. Like good horsemen, they wish their beast to proceed by bounds and capers, and indulge it in every prank and whim short of running away with them. They seem to pride themselves on the violence of their temper as we do on our self-possession and coolness. They mistrust every reasonable, as a calculating, being: "What is man," says Ugo Foscolo, "if exclusively abandoned to the control of cold reason? A villain and a base villain!" These words are a code of law for the whole nation, and every one is, like Jacopo Ortis, ready "to tear his heart from his bosom and cast it off, like an unfaithful attendant, whenever it proves slack to excitement or blunted to feeling.

An Italian woman is then a creature of passion, and, as such, equally susceptible of being led to the extremes of good and evil.

Women are to be found, we are informed by all travellers in Italy, according to all appearances, perfect specimens of uxorial and maternal excellence, and yet designated by public rumour as the heroines of many a gallant intrigue. An obvious contradiction which they fain would ascribe to Italian artfulness and duplicity, and which they contrast with the candour and uprightness of an Englishwoman's character, which, never belying itself even in the last stage of abandonment, never adds hypocrisy to disloyalty and immodesty, and which prompts her, heedless of all consequences to herself and her children, invariably to quit the household her presence would dishonour and pollute.

Would it not sound more like Christian charity and common sense to give an Italian as well as an Englishwoman the benefit of the doubt? Would it not be more humane and generous to estimate her character from her deeds, and give stoutly the lie to common report? Would it not be more like English justice to hold as apocryphal and calumnious every *crim. con.* which has not been duly registered at Doctor's Commons? Long live the English proverb, "Handsome is that handsome does!" As long as a woman acts as a good mother and wife, we insist upon it that she must be what she seems, no matter what the clubs and *cafés* may murmur to her disparagement.

For so very inconsistent are the charges brought against Italian character, that they are at once and in the same breath declared to be of all people in the world the most loose and remiss, in suffering themselves to be carried away by their passions, and the most perfect masters in the art of dissembling and disguising them; at once the hottest hearts and the coolest brains; at once headlong and violent, circumspect and cunning; and, by the same reasoning, it is boldly asserted that an Italian matron

may cloak all the impetuous incontinence of a Lucretia Borgia under a counterfeit of all the virtues of a Vittoria Colonna!

It is not thus, we are obliged to confess, that Italian writers are wont to deal towards foreigners. "In no region of the earth," says our fair authoress, "are so many domestic virtues to be met with as are found to adorn the women of England; nowhere is a woman more readily disposed to show her respect and deference towards her husband, or more active and industrious in ministering to his comforts, or promoting his prosperity."

This compliment—evidently written in the style of Tacitus's golden description of the German tribes, and which might, perhaps, have been more unscrupulously accepted in the good old ages of distaffs and spinning-wheels—this compliment the Italians send back in return for the many indignities heaped upon their name, it being the object of every patriotic writer in that country to raise the moral standard at home by descanting even to exaggeration upon the excellent qualities of other nations.

"Let then a woman's heart," exclaims Countess Pepoli at the close of a long chapter on "Friendship, Love and Coquetry,"—"let a woman's heart be chaste, and her manners and thoughts be chaste; let her greatest beauty be *il Pudore*, and her greatest ornament *la Verecondia*;"—we are obliged to quote her original words, regretting that these sweet Latin terms have not been adopted in the English language. "For if modesty and ingenuousness are, in any time, in any country, the most becoming requisites of our sex, much more are such qualities desirable in the women of Italy, that by their irreprehensible demeanour they may put an end to the unfavourable opinions entertained among foreigners about their character. For who can read without sorrow and anger those books from *oltremonti*, where it is unblushingly asserted that the Italian women are loose to all incontinency, that their life

is wasted among dissipations and follies, and their minds bent only on coquetry and intrigue? No doubt, there is in all this exaggeration and untruth; but I hope it was reserved for our age to silence slander for ever and restore our fair name altogether.

"Nor must we follow the dictates of virtue only because it is conducive to our personal welfare, because it secures the love and respect of our husband and children, and the estimation of all, but also for the sake of our own beloved though unhappy country; which, as long as it produced a race of valiant and generous men, could also boast of giving life to the wisest and noblest of women; wherefore if, choosing our models among the most applauded characters of bygone ages, we in our turn make ourselves patterns of chastity and purity, we shall leave an example which will long survive us, and exercise its regenerating influence among future generations."

But we have too long dwelt on this painful part of our subject, which called forth all the strength of our apologetic arguments; for, in contrasting the merits of women of various lands, we felt it was above all things desirable to test and examine their relative claims to those domestic virtues without which a queen is below the most abject slave in her empire; and it was on this point especially that the superiority of English women is most unanimously admitted. Honour to the fair-famed ladies of this land! Heaven forbid that we should attempt to lift the veil of respectability which enshrines the secret of their home sanctuary, but we plead equal mercy towards the more frail creatures of warmer climates, and we would urge that, even under the disadvantage of the most corrupting social and religious institutions, female nature may yet preserve much of its innate loveliness. We see the amount of guilt brought to a common level among nations, in proportion to the improvement of statistical researches. An estimate of the prevalence of vice, if practicable, would

most probably lead to a similar result. Meanwhile, let us conclude by a brief enumeration of other qualities, only negative, perhaps, but which contribute to enhance the grace of a feminine character, and which are, perhaps, peculiar to the women of our own native land.

An Italian woman, then, though a highly sensitive is by no means a sensual being. She does not value a man for the six-foot-in-his-stockings he stands upon. Mere personal advantages are thrown away upon her. The consciousness of her mental deficiency inclines her to a superstitious regard for intellectual accomplishments. The way to her heart is through the ear, not the eye. Her footmen are not chosen, as the queen's life-guardsmen, in consideration of measure and size; nor are military *beaux* the most popular with her, unless they unite wit and gallantry to spruceness of coat and symmetry of limb.

An Italian woman is not venal or interested. At least she never has a hand in her marriage-bargain, widow-jointure, or separate maintenance. She never holds her husband's purse. The value of gold forms no part of her scanty arithmetic. The very *millionaire* singer or dancer is notorious for lavish improvidence.

A woman in Italy, by taste an artist, is never a showy, exaggerate dresser. Conscious, perhaps, of the pale, delicate style of her beauty, she enhances its charms by the unaffected chasteness of her homely attire. Whatever may be said of the "painted courtesans" at Rome, a well-bred Italian seldom *rouges*. That native mixture of orange and olive — properly, yellow and green — by which nature characterised the bilious south, is, perhaps from necessity, worshipped in Italy under the fashionable appellation of *pattina sentimentale*.

As she is not a *high* dresser so neither is an Italian a *low* dresser. Since Dante's rebuke of his townswomen, bare necks and shoulders are decidedly *mauvais ton*. All charms below the chin must remain a matter of faith with

her lover, till they are definitively adjudged to him for better for worse. On the discovery of her first wrinkle, an Italian belle withdraws from the scene of action. Plain sables, a nun-like habiliment, is alone befitting an old woman. A ghastly old hag, a breathing mummy, in all the gaudy paraphernalia of the last puppet of France, never haunts or saddens an Italian salon—no! not even "for the sake of employing needy milliners, or encouraging trade."

A woman in Italy has an oyster-like fondness for home; she is the worst traveller on earth. She may not, perhaps, point to her Brussels carpets, as the best of her jewels, nor boast of *fire-side* virtues; but she looks with amazement at the crowds of home-loving daughters of Albion, at the swarms of Tomkins, Pumpkins, and Popkins, with caravans of nurses and children, hurrying from town to town, like tribes of gipsies with the parish beadle at their heels. She shrugs her shoulders at the restless curiosity which drives so many tender, timid beings, to brave all the hardships of endless, objectless journeys, and never dreams, without shuddering, of visiting lands which appear, even to their natives, such a cheerless, ineligible sojourn!

An Italian wife certainly prefers her terrace or balcony to the chimney-corner; a moonlight walk or even an opera-box, to a rubber at whist; but she is rooted to her house and country: too indolent, too strongly attached to her climate, her habits, and connexions, to long for the excitement of change.

"Où peut-on être mieux, qu'au sein de sa famille!"

Her meekness and amiability enable her to live at peace with her mother and sisters-in-law. She does not break up her husband's establishment because his house happens to be "too near Holborn, or on the wrong side of Oxford-street." She finds it unnecessary to dismiss her domestics at the end of every fortnight. As long as she loves and is

beloved, she extends her affections to her husband's family, to his home-grown servants, to every animated or inanimated being in his patriarchal household. Her dread of separation is paramount over all considerations of her husband's interests or her children's preferment. She is a creature of impulse; all remonstrances of reason break against the stormy tide of her love.

A woman in Italy is seldom a forward character. 'Corinne' is a *French* creation. An authoress in Italy, or an actress, is a being apart. Female authorship in that country is a kind of anomaly; a sort of moral hermaphrodism. Woman there is trained to shrink from the open air and the public gaze: she is no rider; never in at the death at a fox-hunt; no hand at a whip if her life depended upon it; she never kept a stall at a fancy fair, never took the lead at a debating club; she never addresses a stranger, except, perhaps, behind a mask in carnival; her politics are limited to wearing tricolour ribbons, and refusing an Austrian's hand as a partner in waltzing: she is a dunce, and makes no mystery of it; a coward, and glories in it—at least she keeps her accomplishments for her domestic circle, her moral courage for those rare instances in which affection calls forth the latent energies of her better nature.

For our own part, we are sorry for this. We are very partial to female authorship: we like to look over a book written by a lady; there is, we believe, an immense tract of unknown world in the female heart. There are still barriers of conventional propriety, of sexual etiquette, which render the characters of our own wives and daughters too often a riddle; and we would willingly renounce all the pleasure derivable from a South Sea expedition, to overhear, without indelicacy, a conversation between two fair bosom-friends, in some trying and unguarded moment, or to possess the key to that magic telegraph of nods, and winks,

and smiles, by which two female spirits commune before company, to the utter mystification of the duller sex.

Next to this would be the other no less unhallowed gratification of intercepting one of those four-page, small-hand, close-written, cross-lined, feminine epistles, to the uninitiated conveying scarcely any meaning at all, but where, in every turn, in every syllable, the parties concerned are enabled to decipher so much more than meets the eye.

Next to this, again, is the pleasure of perusing the works of a female writer; for although the fair authoress, knowing that her page is to stand the full glare of broad daylight, may be constantly on her guard, lest she should by any involuntary indiscretion, jeopardise the secret interests of the community, yet some unlucky expression, some half-word, may, in the heat of inspiration, happen to drop from her pen, which will shoot like wild-fire across the benighted understanding of a man who *can* read, and do more than an age of learning towards his initiation into the mysteries of female freemasonry.

Of these voluntary confessions and involuntary revelations, thanks to Heaven and Madame George Sand, we have now enough, and the new novels in French, German, and even Swedish, bid fair to leave scarcely one fold of the female heart unexplored, scarcely one blush of the maiden's cheek unaccounted for.

Of this vast store of recondite information Italian authoresses will give us but an indifferent share. There is hardly more than one romance-writer among the ladies of that once-favoured land, and she was till lately an exile's wife residing at Malta, and bluism had been inoculated in her veins by her English acquaintance.

Finally, an Italian woman is never intolerant. She indulges in no invectives against the frail and unfortunate of her sex. There is not a grain of ostentation in her virtue,

not a scruple of pharisaism in her religion. There is no humbug about her. She judges not lest she be judged. Disgusted with the chit-chat of a slanderous community, she disbelieves every word uttered to her friend's disparagement; she sets public opinion at defiance, and screens its victim with all the ægis of her unpolluted fame.

She is a woman, in short; a thing of feeling and impulse—a rib, a mere dependence on man—a subject only in the first stage of enfranchisement from the utter slavery of the ancient *gyneceum*. Satisfied with her *moral* influence, she has not yet aspired to chartered rights. She is far yet from the rational dignity of a free-born Englishwoman; but the latter, again, has hardly yet risen to the queenly independence of an American she-citizen.

Such are the ranks progressively occupied by the sex on each successive step of civilisation. At Cairo, a woman is an idolised slave; at Milan, or Florence, a cherished article of domestic chattel; in London, a reasoning, perhaps, sometimes even an arguing associate; in New York, she is an equal, and more often an aggravating, overbearing confederate!

CHAPTER X.

GIOBERTI.

Gioberti—Social and Moral Preeminence of the Italians—The Jesuits—Other Monastic Orders—The Benedictines—The Franciscans.

Like all countries on the eve of great events, Italy boasts of her prophet. A deputation of patriots, from Rome, is about to set out for Paris. They are commissioned to lustrate every street of that godless metropolis; they may have to walk up many a pair of stairs, for your seer is often quartered with the astronomer in the watch-tower of the firmament—the garret. Surrounded with want and penury —for what says the poet,—

"Povera e nuda vai, Filosofia,"—

they will find the man—the precursor of Pope Pius IX.; the prophet of the new Italian era; the Abate Vincenzo Gioberti.

They will lay at his feet the homage and good wishes of their country—they will beseech him to come and witness with his own eyes the plenitude of the times. They will point to the *Sapienza*, where a stool is set up for him to deliver his *fatidical* lectures from—they will bear him off in triumph—parade him through the streets of Rome—crown him on the Capitol. A new, startling sight: the apotheosis of a prophet—a living prophet—in his own country!

It may now be fifteen or sixteen years since a young priest was crossing the Alps, in quest of freedom. He was a Piedmontese by birth, a priest by trade, by choice a thinker. In this last capacity he may, perhaps, have displeased the King, Charles Albert, of Sardinia, one of whose court-chaplains he was, and who thought, perhaps, that his almoner's business was to say mass, and not to trouble his head with philosophical speculations.

The young man made himself conspicuous by his talents; consequently obnoxious. The Jesuits traduced him as a liberal: Charles Albert drove him into exile. Such is, or was, in Italy, the way of all genius.

The banished philosopher settled at Paris; hence passed over to Brussels. As a teacher, as a writer, he lived on, as exiles will do. A successful and disinterested publisher had faith in him. Gioberti's volumes accumulated: written in Italian for Belgian readers.

There must have been something in what he said, for the books travelled far. They crept in, stormed in, crowded in, into Piedmont, into Turin, in the presence of royalty itself. Charles Albert had then drunk Jesuitism to the dregs—he was sick of it. He took up, as a cordial, the works of his banished chaplain. His heart relented: he revoked the decree of proscription. He stretched forth his hand: offered to let him in: asked him: tendered his patronage and a pension if he would only come in. In vain! Gioberti had tasted of independence; and what royal bounty can be palatable after it? Besides, he had more to say; something, may be, that might grate in his majesty's ears. He remained inexorable, and we thank Heaven for it. No man can be a court-almoner and a prophet at once.

We shall not enter into any examination of Gioberti's philosophical works. Three of those volumes are intended to refute the errors of Antonio Rosmini, a name with which not many are acquainted out of Italy. Italian philosophy, owing, perhaps, to the want of a philosophical style and

language, seldom travels beyond the Alps. Romagnosi himself, a giant in the estimation of the Lombard youths for half a century, is hardly known to ultramontane readers. Rosmini, Mamiani, or even Gioberti, have as yet written to no purpose; and that, perhaps, because they are rather remarkable for the conception than for the utterance of great thoughts. Gioberti's reasoning has always something wayward and desultory; inexorably prolix also and fatiguing; for one good sound argument, for one bright, new idea, you must put up with a hundred commonplace truisms, with an intolerable deal of mere rhetorical flourish. Our patience has been exhausted at the very first pages. We are, therefore, too utterly incompetent to give an opinion on the merit of such works, to waste many words on the subject*.

Besides, Gioberti's mission began with his *Primato*, with it also his fame; his ascendancy over the minds of his contemporaries†.

We did not think much of that work, at the time of its publication. "Another panegyrist of Italy!" we exclaimed, and we saw the announcement with regret. Eulogies are best recited by the coffin of the dead. There is always something funereal in an encomiastic oration. We never deem it wise to write the biography of a living man, unless we feel sure that his race is run and his mission upon earth fulfilled. In the like manner, we think that a nation, in the full possession and in the free exercise of its

* For the benefit of such readers as may be interested in the subject, we subjoin the title of Gioberti's philosophical works. "Degli Errori Filosofici di Antonio Rosmini," 3 vols. 8vo. "Introduzione allo Studio della Filosofia," 4 vols. 8vo. "Del Buono," 1 vol. 8vo. "Del Bello," 1 vol. 8vo. "La Protologia," 1 vol. 8vo. "Teorica del Sovrannaturale," 1 vol. 8vo., &c., &c., &c.

† Del Primato Civile e Morale degl' Italiani, per Vincenzo Gioberti, Tomi 2. Brusselle, 1843. (Gioberti's "Moral and Social Preeminence of the Italians," 2 vols. Brussels, 1843.)

energies, courts no applause, and discountenances praise. In the full consciousness of its importance and influence, it moves to its goal and never looks backward. It works and boasts not.

Who would think of writing two volumes to prove the preponderance of England in all commercial and maritime enterprise, or to demonstrate the extent of her manufactories or the activity of her trade? Who would not consider such a work as impolitic as it would be uncalled for and superfluous?

With an enslaved, and, consequently, a degraded race, the case may be different. A man with an empty pocket may have more leisure to descant on the countless wealth hoarded up by his great-grandfather, and lavished by his careless parent. There may be some comfort, although certainly no great dignity, for those in humble circumstances to revert to periods of former greatness and affluence, and it may be justifiable for a slave to endeavour to gild his chains with a lustre derived from the memorials of his progenitors. Still we apprehend the world would not readily receive truths that need so much demonstration; and we could not help thinking too much has already been written in corroboration of the principle which the Abate Vincenzo Gioberti had made the theme of his long dissertation, namely, "the moral and social preeminence of the Italians over all the nations of the universe."

The author himself, indeed, seemed aware of the danger of so freely lavishing his incense, and securing for his countrymen such an invidious supremacy over the rival nations:

"A nation," says he, as he developes his object in a verbose proemium, "will not be able to assert her rights to that rank which is due to her, unless she is conscious of the commensuration of her merits with her claims; there-

fore, praiseworthy as excessive modesty may be said to be in a private man, it is always condemnable in a whole nation, as it only evinces its supineness and disqualification for its high destinies.

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"When a nation has fallen to the utmost depth of misery and social degradation, when it is prostrated and its strength broken, to endeavour to reanimate its courage by such words of praise as might in different circumstances prove dangerous, is not only an excusable, but even a merciful and generous office. We have nothing to fear from the pride of men wholly disheartened.

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"It is, indeed, required that the arguments brought forward, and the facts stated, should be strictly true, because truth must prevail over all other considerations; because it is not lawful to flatter even the unfortunate, and no real good can come from adulation; . . . . . but when a nation has received from Heaven irrefutable gifts and privileges, and seems to have forgotten them, it becomes a duty to remind her of them, without apprehending that the consciousness of her own energies may even lead to inanity or presumption."

Gioberti hoped thus to raise his countrymen to a proper sense of their dignity, and to fit them for high destinies by convincing them that they have always been, are, and must be, the finest and noblest race of men in existence.

We rather doubted the expediency and efficacy of such lenitive measures. We were rather inclined to trust the bitterness of the stormy, upbraiding, and withering sarcasm of the eloquence of Demosthenes: to lay on the lash to the right and left, till blood issued from every stripe. No less is required, we thought, to stir from its lethargy a people degraded by long religious and political

thraldom, long accustomed to a life of passive and sensual indulgence, reared up amidst the trammels of an enervating tyranny and a corrupting superstition.

To the recital of Italy's departed greatness, we imagined, men, under such circumstances, would listen with vacant apathy: they would ground on the records of their ancestral exploits their titles to a few years' relaxation and repose; they would deem themselves privileged to cull their roses under the laurels that their forefathers have planted; or, if for a moment alive to their present state of abjection and destitution, they would argue, that if all the wisdom and heroism of their predecessors had no power to avert the evils by which the country was threatened, neither is it probable that any efforts of a comparatively weak, disarmed, and divided population could now have strength sufficient to put an end to their deep-rooted, time-sanctioned, irresistible misery.

Recent facts have borne out Gioberti in his sanguine anticipations, and proved the utter groundlessness of our apprehensions. Much of what he then said has come to pass: and, in order that we may well judge of the probability of the further verification of his prophecies, it may be desirable to enter more minutely into his views, and to test the soundness of his argument.

Gioberti then insisted that the Italians must rise again: once more must reestablish their social and moral ascendancy over civilised nations: that the consummation of these mighty events must be owing to the influence of the Head of the Catholic Religion, aided by a league of the Italian princes, and acting upon views of sound and rational liberalism.

This was Gioberti's theory in 1843. In 1847, the Italians are governed by a noble-minded, enlightened pope; Piedmont, Tuscany, and other states have pledged themselves to support him in the vindication of his independent rights, and to follow in the adoption of his bene-

volent measures. So far have the Italians risen from the dead. So far has Gioberti undisputed claims to political prophecy.

It only remains to see whether the events we have so lately witnessed actually took place as an immediate effect of the causes pointed out by Gioberti, and how far we may rely on his judgment for the further accomplishment of his views.

In compliance with the "Ab Jove Principium" of the Latin poet, Gioberti undertook to demonstrate, that God alone is an absolutely *autonomous* or self-existent being; and that the individuals or tribes of mankind derive from Him the power of dictating laws and exercising influence over their fellow-beings in proportion as He has awarded them more or less of this *relative autonomous* faculty. A people so singularly privileged will be easily known by proving; 1st, that it has *created* the civilisation of all other nations; 2nd, that it *preserves* in its bosom the germ and fundamental principles of that civilisation; 3rd, that it possesses, and has repeatedly developed, the power of purifying and restoring it, if perverted and corrupted.

These three qualities Gioberti, of course, finds united in his own Italy, which being thus the *Creator*, *Preserver*, and *Redeemer* of that civilisation which is to become universal, may deservedly be hailed as the parent of mankind.

The first claims of Italy to this catholic superiority are laid on the peculiarity of its geographical position. The author takes it for granted that the Mediterranean is still the centre of all human movement (which may be true if the overland road to India becomes every day more practicable); and as the Italian Peninsula, with its insular adjacences, undoubtedly stands prominent among the lands bordering upon that tideless sea, he hesitates not to place in that country the ὀμφαλὸς γαῖας, the centre of the Universe.

Granting even that the Mediterranean, as it is assuredly by association the most interesting, may again be made the most important of all seas—granting that even in that case Spain and Egypt might not have the advantage of Italy—being so situated as to command the two extremities of that sea without being hemmed in by its narrow boundaries;—admitting, in short, all that the author asserts in favour of the local importance of Italy—men are in our days less disposed to consider the destinies of a country as depending to any great extent on its geographical advantages. What availed it to Spain to possess the key of the Mediterranean, or to Egypt to have the means of opening the most direct route to the East Indies? What protection did the iron-bound chain of the Himalaya afford to the degraded Hindoo, or the Alps to the doomed denizen of the Vale of the Po? Behold a sturdy race of islanders from the north of the Atlantic, driven from their shores by the very gloom of their ungenial climate, snatch from the Spaniard the frowning rock of Gibraltar, seize upon Malta, Corfu, and as many harbours as are likely to answer their purposes; proclaim the *Mare Interum* a British lake, establish a canal, a railway—a line of aerial steam-carriages, if needed—athwart the Libyan desert, and ride gallantly with their steamers to the east and west, encompassing the globe in their gigantic dominion!

Talk of bright skies, of elastic paradisaical atmosphere, of fertile soil, of happy alternation of hill and dale!—man, unless braced by the discipline of a stern, Spartan education, rots like a rank weed among the luxuries of a southern climate; the centre of action, consequently of all social and moral preeminence, is removed to a barren land, under a dense canopy of damp fogs, where spring resembles a rehearsal of the flood, and winter "ends in July to recommence in August." It is thus that mankind improve the bountiful gifts of their Creator!

After a long dissertation on the mere material elements

of past, present, and future greatness, the author proceeds to announce the great moral principle on which he grounds the preeminence of Italy, and this he founds on the triumphant influence of Roman Catholic Christianity. He demonstrates that pontifical ascendancy is substantially identified with Italian nationality. He refutes all the arguments of ancient Ghibelinism, and all its tendencies to Italian unity, contending that all the evils of Christianity and the calamities of Italy arose from the attempts to submit the church to the temporal authority of the empire. He insists, that Italy has received from the church all that light of civilisation for which Europe and the world are indebted to her. He considers the Italians as the chosen tribe, the Levites of Christianity. He disclaims the glories of pagan Rome as grounded on that military ambition which is so different from the truly Italian preponderance, whose object must be the well-being of mankind. His enthusiasm kindles at the recital of the exploits of modern Rome—the truly catholic, cosmopolite spirit of her missions. This great work of Christian redemption commenced in Rome, ever since the holy faith was there cemented with the blood of the apostles. It continued ever afterwards, notwithstanding the interruption of the frequent calamities of Rome and Italy. *Victa Terra victores domuit.* It subdued and humanised its Teutonic destroyers. That mission is even now progressing. The new pope and his allies are fulfilling it.

Italy must henceforth find in her own bosom the means of enfranchisement, regeneration, and union: and this most desirable object must be effected without intestine dissensions and tumults, without the intervention of foreign armies, or even of foreign ideas. The principle of Italian unity, greatness, and power, is—the pope. Under the pontifical standard every true Italian heart must rally. All the provinces of Italy must be joined to the great metropolis by a bond of federative union. The pontiff is

to be the president of the great diet of Italian princes. A confederate government is the most natural to Italy; it is the most efficient and durable for every country in the world. Nothing fetters and paralyses the energies of a nation more than a narrow-minded spirit of centralisation. Italy can only exist by the means of this catholic league. Catholicism, in its turn, can only thrive by virtue of this Italian alliance. Of this federation, as the pope is to be the head, so the House of Savoy—especially the brave, wise, and consistent Charles Albert of Carignano—must be the right arm.

There were not many in Italy to chime in with these ideas, at the time of their first announcement. By degrees, however, Cesare Balbo, a writer of note, a conscientious man, seemed to have adopted them, in his work, "Delle Speranze d'Italia." D'Azeglio, a man looked upon with even greater veneration throughout Italy, acted upon them. The King of Sardinia was supposed to encourage their diffusion. The works of Gioberti, as well as those of the two above-mentioned writers, were said to have been published with his royal consent, and even after his own personal revision. The prophet's word was invested with almost official authority; and the Italo-Catholic League became the *mot d'ordre* for all the moderate and rational patriots.

It is not difficult to perceive that Gioberti's theory aimed no higher than at a renewal of the old notions of Guelphism; a Guelphism, too, stripped of that democratic element, which atoned for its anarchic tendencies by brilliant deeds of patriotic heroism. A sovereign pope, at the head of seven or eight crowned vassals, bearing only the name of independent princes—a mitred autocrat, protected by half-a-dozen little kings and little grand dukes! The Austrians were not mentioned in this admirable arrangement: but, from the author's repeated invectives against foreign invaders, it seemed plain that he con-

sidered it advisable for the tyrants of Lombardy "to pack up their things and be off."

The Italian crisis is now at hand, and Gioberti's theories are about to be put to the test of experience. We are writing at a great disadvantage, for we are on the eve of important events, and we have hardly time to dwell on any well-grounded conjectures.

The Italians have, then, found a pope after their own heart. The King of Sardinia and the Grand Duke of Tuscany have, either from choice or coercion, adopted his liberal views and are to some extent pledged to support him. The Austrians, aware of the awful emergency of their position, are pausing for a time, ere they venture upon a decisive struggle. The powers of Europe are either too discordant, or too indifferent, or else, again, too far removed, to take any very active part in Italian matters. Italy may soon be brought to engage single-handed with her northern oppressor. No opportunity could be more favourable to ascertain the correctness of Gioberti's estimate of the elements of Italian redemption.

Let us, however, look brightly towards the future. Let our conjectures take the most favourable course. Let us look upon Austria, as she apparently is now, paralysed by the firm attitude of the Italian princes, and by the unanimity of the Italian people. Let us suppose that domestic dangers and foreign remonstrances may not only check her further progress, but even drive her back from her first aggression; that consequently the pope and his allies, relieved from all uneasiness on the part of their common enemy, may be perfectly at liberty to follow the impulse of their hearts, or the pressing solicitations of their people. The work of Italian regeneration could then proceed unimpeded. All reasonable reforms might fairly become the topic of calm and peaceful discussion; every chance thrown open for the realisation of Gioberti's momentous ideas.

The revolution that the author of the "Primato" seemed

to look forward to, was to be chiefly of a theocratic tendency. National emancipation was to lead to Catholic supremacy. The Italians would rally round the standard of St. Peter; the papal crosier was *the Sign*, in which Italy would still conquer. "Hierocracy," says he, "must be at the bottom of all political orders; the priesthood the element of power. Such an order of things was decreed in the Old Testament, confirmed and perfected by Christ in the New Law. The government of the Jesuits of Paraguay is the *beau-ideal* of a Christian state. The priesthood may rule by dictatorship or by arbitration. Its absolute autocracy is necessary in an imperfect state of civilisation. Nothing, therefore, could be more legitimate than the sway exercised by the pontiffs in the middle ages. In progress of time, the 'civil conscience of nations' supersedes the necessity of this dictatorial supremacy. Then the world learns to obey the 'arbitration' or moral influence of the church. The pope then becomes the organ of universal peace and union, the vindicator of the law of nations. The continual state of war and anarchy in Europe arose from its rebellion against this paternal primacy. Let the pope be obeyed and all mankind will be brethren."

The emancipation and federation of the Italian States will then, according to Gioberti, lead to the establishment of papal supremacy all over the country, from which it will eventually, be exercised over all other parts of the civilised world.

The plans for a constitution such as Gioberti proposed for the Italian princes are not far from the system of policy now on the eve of being adopted, especially at Florence and Rome. He declared himself in favour of a temperate monarchy, that is, he advocated the instalment of councils of state and allowed public opinion the benefit of the press—a representation without an elective system:—a press under the control of a censorship.

Councils of state, appointed by the head of the govern-

ment, are already in existence in Italy. The only important difference may consist in the popularity of the councillors. The prince may endeavour to hit on, but will not condescend to consult, the suffrage of the nation. Consequently these councillors are but too apt to become passive instruments in the hands of the sovereign that called them into being. Much of the obnoxiousness of tyrannic measures may be removed from the head of the wilful ruler who planned them, to the devoted head of his impotent and subservient advisers. A council of state is, at the best, but a poor apology for a popular representation. It is often an aggravation of the evils of unmitigated despotism. The throne-room at Naples is ornamented with gilded images representing the different provinces of the two Sicilies. These dumb effigies have been shrewdly styled the *representatives* of the nation. They are no bad emblem of the efficiency of a council of state. The illustrious members of that body, in an Italian government of the old school, were nodding statues, moving and even speaking statues, still nothing but statues.

Much less can we perceive the practicability of the author's suggestions as to the establishment of what he calls a *free* but not *licentious* press. The censorship should be intrusted (he says), not to one man, but to a *censorial council.* This tribunal should sit from sunrise to sunset, and every line intended to appear in print should be previously submitted to their grave deliberation. Such an office has been actually established at Rome, and we are rather at a loss to conceive how it will work in the end. It would certainly be no sinecure in England. Think of such a magistracy residing in Guildhall, to pronounce on the fate of every book, pamphlet, and paper issuing from the London press! People are still debating as to the equity and expediency of a censorship of the press: but are they aware that, in the present state of England, France, and America, however desirable, it has become materially

impossible? It is for the same reason that the establishment of railways has made all passport regulations a dead letter in Belgium and Germany. Travellers may yet have to carry a *feuille de route* in their pockets; but where are there gendarmes and police agents sufficient to examine them all? Obsolete engines of the suspicious impotence of despotism have no chance of standing against the hasty tread of civilisation.

Gioberti is no less theocratic in his details of civil government. The monks, he contends, are and must be the leaders of public opinion. They are idealists, philosophers by the very nature of their secluded existence. They have been, in every age, the promulgators of tolerance and freedom of thought. The Church is pure from all religious persecution. She is innocent of all the blood shed in her name, ostensibly for her sake. Worldly men made religion a pretext for deeds of violence and ambition, but the clergy invariably discountenanced their proceedings. No pope—it is Gioberti who says it—ever shed blood. No human being was ever endowed with so mild and dove-like a temper as Dominic, the Spanish founder of the Inquisition.

So far the first volume, which establishes the superiority of Italy in "action." Part II. demonstrates her pre-eminence of "thought." Thought is the only element of supremacy in modern times. Now, Italy is first in intellectual universality. Roman Catholicism alone is encyclopædical. It is the system of systems. The spirit of generalisation of ideas is eminently Italian. It constitutes the characteristic type of the Pelasgic mind. The Pelasgic is the most bright and far-sighted of all Caucasian races, and that race exists nowhere so unmixed and primitive as in Italy. Again, Italy is first in philosophical sciences; she never plunged into the metaphysical extravagances of Pantheism. Italy is first in theological sciences; her theology being alone unchangeable, perfect and free. Italy is, like-

wise, first in physical sciences, in history, in poetry, and the fine arts; in language and philology.

The intellectual excellence of his own countrymen being thus satisfactorily proved, the author next demonstrates the inferiority of all the rest of mankind. Preeminence could not be claimed by France, because geographically and ethnographically disqualified: not by Germany, because, however great, the German genius is not original, nor universal, nor operative; not by Russia or England, who can be, at the best, only the handmaids of Italy, bearing their imperfect Christianity and transitional civilisation among the wild tribes of the East and West, till they and their colonies shall once more merge in the great bosom of religious and intellectual Roman Catholicism.

In one word—and to use an expression very popular with the most sanguine of Gioberti's countrymen—"The human mind walks in England; it skips and capers in France. It plods and gropes in Germany—in Italy it soars!" It did so once, at least, and may still, under favourable circumstances.

Thus—Rome, Italy, Europe, and the world, form one vast concentric system of moral and social progress. The centre of life is the Vatican, and its element loses in intensity what it gains in expansion. Italy is the Sun of the Universal system of nations.

We have thus far followed the train of Gioberti's ideas, because they appeared to us to contain something true and striking in the midst of a great deal that is obviously specious and fatuous.

In the first place, we thought the author deserved no little credit for political foresight, for not despairing of the papacy, at an epoch in which the infatuation of a wrathful old priest filled the measure of the long-cherished abomination of mankind for Rome. To conceive the possibility of a popular pope in the pontificate of Gregory XVI. was indeed something akin to prophetic revelation. Gioberti

must have dreamed of a Pius IX.; and we revere the instinct that led to such a splendid result. There is a spirit abroad, in all, but chiefly in the Protestant, countries, that might induce us to admit of the practicability of a *re-approachment* between the different tribes throughout Christendom. A weariness, an uneasiness; a loathing of their long, deplorable divisions; a longing after some new and plausible form of Catholicity. Will Pius IX. take advantage of this, we almost said, morbid disposition, and turn the tide in his favour? And could he do it, if willing? The revolution that is now in progress in Italy is purely of a political cast. The patriots are fain to have a pope at their head, whose sanction secures the cooperation of the clergy and of the uneducated classes. But are the promoters of Italian nationality really warm and sincere in the cause of Catholicism? Is thought and belief so generally identified in Italy, and is not rather all mental development naturally and invariably at war with the superannuated system which the Church of Rome persists in upholding?

Catholicism, as it is, we feel sure, will not be found consistent with liberal institutions, certainly not with even a moderate freedom of opinion. But if the pope, reassured from temporal difficulties, will, in very good earnest, turn his mind to spiritual reforms, if he will allow of the coexistence of religion and reason—and if he can do so without jeopardising the unity and integrity of the Catholic bond, then is it indeed possible that the stray flocks may look back towards their Vatican sheepfold. It has been easier for the Protestants to demolish the old church than to erect a new one, in any manner rivalling its dignity and stability. Their edifices—Gioberti is correct—were only imperfect and transitional. Freedom of conscience, illimitedness of discussion, is all the real permanent good ever achieved by them. If the secret be found of combining this inestimable advantage with true Chris-

tian universality, the Gospel will receive a new incalculable impulse. Much of the solution of the problem depends on the future conduct of Pius IX. Italy is, we apprehend, tired of irreligion. The scepticism which from every bench of every Italian university sneered not simply at popery, but at the whole work of Divine revelation—which had levelled with the ground, not merely the outwork of blind superstition, but the sanctuary itself—is now generally discountenanced. Men are fain to believe—but what? The boiling of St. Januarius's blood, or the prodigies of the virgin saint, Philomela? The holy winding-sheet, or the stained handkerchief of St. Veronica? The temple of God is an Augean stable in Italy: is the pope endowed with the Herculean strength required for its purification? The gulph between Reason and Romanism in its actual state is world-wide. Will Pius leap over it? and will he drag his monks and priests, his deep-sunken multitude after him? God is great! Good-will, freedom, and education work wonders!

If Catholicism and Italian nationality could thus proceed side by side, it is clear that Italy would derive from its social organisation a decided advantage over her European sisters. There is much in what Gioberti says about the Italian *constructiveness* that we are willing to admit: We sympathise with the patriotic fondness which can give rise to an enthusiasm falling so little short of sheer insanity: and we feel the more concerned about the soundness of the author's intellect, as his work, in the midst of glaring extravagances, gives evidence of deep genius and learning. But we are still more interested in the fate of Italy, and our attachment to that country is by no means colder than his own. We firmly believe in its incompressible vitality: we expect to see it restored to a rank worthy of its ancient renown. We acknowledge that, as a nation, Italy has thrice sunk and risen, thrice exercised a social or moral sway over the world.

The PAST, in short, is all in favour of Italy. On the PRESENT we cannot dwell without painful feelings. The FUTURE is in the hand of Providence: it greatly depends on the wisdom of the rulers of the country, still more on the unanimity and firmness of the Italians themselves. If they are true to their country, if they learn to emancipate and govern themselves, if they succeed in combining unity of faith and worship with the unlimited exercise of their intellectual faculties, nothing can prevent them from being the happiest of all people, because Heaven has, naturally, blessed their climate and soil; nothing can prevent their being a highly cultivated race, because the Italian mind, in the worst of times, invariably evinced all the radiant brightness of their cloudless sky. But with such advantages they ought to be satisfied. The nonage of nations is at an end. There is a limit to the social and moral preeminence of one race. The northern nations have the start of Italy. Under the most favourable circumstances, she must play a subordinate part in war, politics, and trade. Nothing short of a miracle can give her the lead in the march of material improvement. Ours is the age of COAL, and Italy has not a lump of that precious material. Her people had not the least share in the world-upsetting inventions of the nineteenth century. Her present tendency is to a mere confederacy of friendly states. None of the great results that are to be obtained from the mighty combination of masses need be looked for from a nation so constituted. She must, for an indefinite period, follow in the rear of European advancement. She might endeavour to reassert her supremacy over the wide domain of learning; but even science and literature follow in the train of the practical arts of civilisation. Intellectual life is always commensurate with the rapidity of social movement. Italian genius itself was not proof against political and commercial stagnation. The fine arts, even, felt the

deadening influence of the universal decline. Yet a few years more of lethargy, and Italy was soulless!

Her resurrection must needs be gradual and painful. Up-hill work for many a generation to come. Centuries must elapse ere she has provided for her material well-being. The very air is contaminated, the earth corrupted and rotten. Talk of preeminence indeed! Alas! God has withdrawn his eye from poor Italy! Behold! the ocean recedes from her ports, the galleys and argosies of her trading republics are rotting a-strand. Incessant land-slips sweep adown her mountain sides, choke up the course of her streams, swamp the fields of the plain. The hideous malaria hovers triumphantly aloft, breathing desolation on her shores, blasting the pride of her cities. The bleak aquilon treads close on the footsteps of her northern invaders, rushes headlong across the bare Alpine defiles, riots uncurbed over the defenceless campaign. Anon, a torrid heat weighs on the stagnant air, dooming the land to a three months' drought, unrelieved by a breath or shower. Oh, the famed climate of the Eden of Europe! Siberia and Sahara seem to join hands at Milan. The work of man has done its utmost to lay the bald, shadowless earth open to all atmospheric inclemencies.

Half Tuscany and all the sea-coast is but a pestilential morass. Man and time conspire to undo the work of friendly nature. In the same manner the vast majority of the population lies in hopeless prostration. Shivering in unsheltered huts, sweltering in noisome dust, squalid, stunted, diseased, they pine in want and ignorance. None but the priest thrives; none walks erect but the Austrian. An improvident obsolete tillage, a paltry peddling and chaffering, employ a small fraction. The great mass are idle mendicants: the nobles and lords of the land, too often the greatest of beggars. With this, eight courts and capitals; hotbeds of idleness and corruption. Spanish Bour-

bons and Austrian archdukes: imbecility, cowardice, wantonness enthroned: with this a pope and Jesuits; every third day a holiday, every twenty-third inhabitant a priest.

Look at one of their *festas* of the *Madonna*, and dream of mental superiority! The Italian mind is tainted at its very sources: its emancipation from gross superstition will prove even more arduous a task than the draining of the Pontine marshes. The depth of its abjection is, of course, proportionate to the loftiness of its original aspirations and vastness of its capabilities.

May God have mercy on desolate Italy! Behold! new roads are thrown open in the East. The path to India lies once more through the midland sea. Italy looks on supine, helpless. She follows in the rear of northern advancement; substitutes gas for her fragrant oils; barters her Carrara marble for dingy Newcastle coals; she prates about railways and free trade; alternates her processions with scientific meetings. She apes the dullest of her neighbours, and dreams of her sovereignty of nations!

On the whole, there is nothing more mean and idle than this miserable vaunt about superiority of race. Mr. Disraeli equally prates about the preeminence of the Hebrew people, "the most unmixed branch of the great Caucasian stock," Egypt, Greece, and Palestine, have had their own day, no less than Italy. It would be difficult to prove on what ground the former countries could aspire to a revival of their moral and social influence, or else by what privilege the latter could hope for exemption from the laws of rise and decline, which are the common lot of all sublunar things. Gioberti lays all his expectations on a revival of Catholicism in all its primitive integrity, but Catholicism itself is not essentially and indissolubly identified with Italy. Christianity invariably followed in the wake of civilisation. Palestine gave it birth. It had its seat in Rome, so long as Rome was the centre of the world. It follows now the westward march of mankind.

Were the Christian tribes again to rear up a common altar, it is more than questionable whether its shrine would still be at the Vatican. The living faith sits ill at ease amongst the ruins of departed greatness. Rome, like Jerusalem, is little better than a desert—perhaps equally irreclaimable.

Meanwhile, every hour leaves Italy a thousand miles in the rear of those Northmen who followed once in her track. Speed, Italy! for human progress is almost losing sight of thee! The spark of life thou harbourest still in thy bosom is waning fast. Let thy struggle be for existence; leave to the more fortunate the unprofitable question of preeminence.

The work of Gioberti created the strangest sensation at the time of its publication. The powers then in existence received the author's advances with coldness and mistrust. Pope, princes and priests fancied they could see through the shallow artifice. "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes," was their motto. Gioberti, though a priest, was a patriot. His affectation of piety and loyalty could only conceal treasonable designs. During the pontificate of Gregory XVI. his works were proscribed at Rome. The author was a philosopher and said no mass—and so far might be looked upon as an apostate priest.

The Italian people, nevertheless, pronounced a more favourable sentence. The "Primato" was introduced into Italy by all open and clandestine means. It was laid on many a parson's desk by the side of the breviary. The Court of Sardinia (then at variance with Austria on some unimportant commercial matters) deemed it expedient to countenance its views. The lay clergy were gradually won over to them; and after the accession of Pope Pius IX. it became a text-book with the monastic orders likewise.

The Jesuits alone remained inflexible. The author of the "Primato" had evinced no animosity against them. An enthusiastic admirer of their great founder, he looked

upon them as the most active and faithful militia in the Catholic host. Like the rest of the priesthood, they only needed opportune reforms to fit them to become main instruments in the work of Italian redemption.

The Jesuits spurned his friendly offer. Two of them, Father Pellico, from Turin, and Father Curci, from Naples, attacked him with intemperate virulence. Hence was there war of extermination between the parties. The abolition of the order had become indispensable to the welfare of Italy and Christianity *.

The development of this new fact has given birth to two works, which may be looked upon as a mere continuation of the "Primato." The *Prolegomeni* are, indeed, merely a long introduction to the two original volumes; and the *Gesuita Moderno* contains, besides a refutation of the abusive arguments of his two adversaries, a recapitulation and reproduction of the author's views on the future destinies of his country †.

There is something deplorably mean and revolting in the polemic part of the author's performance. From the very first appearance of his writings, we were offended by that egotism which engaged him into a thousand apologetic phrases regarding both his "little person" and "little book," and his "sweet reader," till we thought the whole work was to be made up of "Scuse" and "Nuove Scuse dell' autore." But now the base scurrility of one of his

* The works alluded to appeared under the following titles: "A Vincenzo Gioberti, Francesco Pellico," Genoa, 1845.—"Fatti ed argomenti in risposta alle molte parole di Vincenzo Gioberti." Naples, 1845. The first of these two writers is a brother of Silvio Pellico. This unfortunate martyr of Austria, now brought to the last stage of mental agony, is well known to have embraced the cause of the Jesuits, to whose body his brother has lately been associated.

† "Prolegomeni del Primato Civile e Morale degli Italiani Scritti dall' Autore." Brusselle, 1845. 1 vol.—Il Gesuita Moderno, per Vincenzo Gioberti," 4 vols. Losanna, 1847.

adversaries seems to authorise him to a corresponding departure from the commonest rules of dignity and decorum. Five hundred and thirteen pages in the Preface to the "Modern Jesuit" are consecrated to the furtherance of this ignoble warfare. We have thrown down the book in utter disgust,

"Chè il voler ciò udire è bassa voglia;"

wondering how it ever could be that a man gifted with so superior a judgment, at the greatest height of his popularity, too, could stoop to resent the insults of such worthless assailers, and aspire to the poor glory of meeting them on their own ground and fighting them with their own weapons—slander and contumely. The very highest merits in a work ushered in by such a Proemium would be lost upon us. The religion of the author could never allow us to forget his questionable charity, and the strength of his arguments would never inspire us with any confidence in the calmness of his reason. So much for his "Discorso Preliminare."

The great bulk of the work contains much important but ill-digested matter. For a man who has consecrated his lifetime to logical and metaphysical studies, Gioberti is the most desultory and incongruous of writers. Of the Jesuits he says all that is known and no more. He examines all the causes that led to their expulsion under Clement XIV., magnifies the greatness of views and honesty of intentions of this best of popes, and gives clear hints of the means that led to his tragical end. He points out the reasons that actuated their restoration by Pius VII., in 1814: stating the hopes that good pontiff entertained of reforming and popularising them: and gives ample proofs of their utter perversity and incorrigibleness. He enumerates the organic vices of the order; ascends to the origin of their institution; and, after a whole chapter of most eloquent praises bestowed on their holy founder, Loyola,

and his immediate brotherhood, he shows how corruption and depravation almost immediately crept in, and characterised his disciples from their very first organisation. He asserts that all the power which their compact and strict discipline, their lax and unscrupulous morality, gave them, was invariably turned to the aggrandisement of the order: that far from using their power to the greatest glory and increment of the Church, they often proved the most insubordinate and most hostile members of the Christian community: that the popes themselves, no less than the princes, no less than all the other orders of priesthood, had reasons to fear and detest them: that the whole Catholic hierarchy, with the exception of them only, admits of social advancement; nay, that it invariably developed progressive and regenerative tendencies—that, in short, there is life in the pope and cardinals, in the sleek Benedictines, and even in the squalid Capuchins; the Jesuits alone are dead and deathly.

Determined not to leave them one inch of ground to stand upon, he strips them of their boasted missionary glories, by proving their sacrilegious subserviency in China and the Indies, where they ministered to the idolatrous propensities of their heathen disciples, adopted their pagan dogmas and practices, with the base object of outdoing their fellow-labourers in the Lord's vineyard, and establishing their sway over the untutored minds of their proselytes. He contends that their literature and instruction were limited to a barren classicism, chilling and paralysing the mind, and unfitting it for the noble exertions of original conception. To them he ascribes the prostration of Italian genius during the last two centuries, the prevalence of the puerile inanities of the Arcadian academies, the emasculate tendency of Italian literature in its manifold branches. The usurpations of foreign powers only robbed Italy of political rights: but its mental and moral degra-

dation is altogether owing to the incompatibility of Jesuitism with intellectual existence.

All this, we need not say, chimes in with the common report current throughout the Continent against the obnoxious order. As in the days of Ganganelli, no charge can be too enormous or too absurd against the Jesuits. Novelists, no less than philosophers, accumulate evidence to their utter confusion and extermination. The "mad-dog" cry is raised against them. Were the Jesuits the most inoffensive of beings, this universal inveteracy of the whole community against their race would be sufficient to lash them into the madness of despair.

We have been brought up in a holy horror and enmity of the dark fraternity, and can most conscientiously protest we do not love them: nay, positively, we do dislike them: but we hate fanaticism and exaggeration even more; we mistrust public opinion, the louder and the more intemperate its uproar.

Fifteen years have barely elapsed since the heroes of July were heard along the Boulevards, singing confidently in the first flush of victory,

> "Non, non, donnons nous l'bras,
> Les Jésuites ne reviendront pas!"

But the dead alone never return, and Jesuitism is immortal. Behold now all France convulsed at the sight of the resuscitated bugbear:—Zwinglian Switzerland raving and bleeding to ward it off its boundaries; the old cradle of Calvinism, after in vain exorcising it with provident precepts and precautionary admonitions, resorting to the more carnal arguments of fire and sword, and plunging into a civil war of which Religion is either cause or pretext!

Jesuitism, however, is not to be put down by fire and sword. It is something manifold, proteiform. It thrives

under many a name, many a garb and costume—under broad-brim, surplice, and gown. What of that? Let religion be cased in a panoply of unbounded freedom of inquiry. She lives by it, or is unworthy to live.

England drove out the Jesuits in 1604. All Europe was rid of them in 1767. The pope disavowed them in 1773;—and yet behold them, here and there and every where! Where is the good, then, of proscribing edicts? What real good has France derived from papal interference? or what advantageous result can the Swiss radicals hope from the submission of the Sonderbund? Jesuitism is strong in the unredeemable weakness of mankind.

From the depth of our hearts we pity the people on whom Jesuitism is laid by despotic rule. Maria Louisa, Duchess of Parma, palms it on her subjects in expiation of her own sins. In vain do school-boys storm, honest citizens protest, even her Italian ministers remonstrate. In the Loyola ravens come, croaking, with Austrian bayonets to back them—their broad cloaks screening their patroness's throne, and the stains with which her follies and frailties have soiled it.

These are odious measures—and yet the proscriptions of France and the proceedings of Switzerland are even more illegal—by far more contemptible. In countries blessed with freedom of discussion, an appeal to force betrays the impotence of all other arguments. The University of Paris cannot confute the Jesuits without the authority of Gregory XVI.! A papal bull and not the *Charte* is now the palladium of the liberties of France! These *faux pas*, and these alone, satisfy us of the real progress of Jesuitism on the Continent. The civil war in Switzerland gives rise to still more melancholy reflections. Can any violent measure cure a few enthusiasts of their delusion? The Yankee republicans tried it. Set up by a fire-and-brimstone *orthodox* preacher, the Boston Puritans made a bonfire of the Cloister at Mount Benedict, and

spirited away the nuns in their night-gown and slippers, driving them all over the country. What was the result? More than thirty-one convents, male and female, are now flourishing in Yankee Land: even to say nothing of the Shakers' establishments, promiscuous monasteries for both sexes,—a refinement upon the ancient *cenobium*, where the sanctity of the recluse is put to the test of constant, immediate temptation.

There is in man an innate, deep-seated, ineradicable tendency to insanity. How many years is it since Lorenzo de Medici pointed to the convent as the lunatic asylum of a Christian community? How long since a German monk turned his back upon his cloistered prison; and, Samson-like, carried its iron gates along with it?

Insanity is but indifferently cured by the horse-whip and straight-jacket. Error must be reasoned out of man, be he never so stubborn and idiotic. Independent of the iniquity of such a proceeding, to kill a man is not to cure him. Be the Jesuits never so crafty, never so active, never so numerous, we are still in favour of universal, unlimited toleration. It is the wadded cuirass against which the shaft of bigotry is sooner blunted than against the rigid but brittle shield of persecution.

Jesuitism cannot prevail against unbounded freedom of inquiry, or there is more in it than its opponents have hitherto brought against it.

Much as we dread them in the despotic states of Italy, we would see them attacked, in France and in Switzerland, by no other weapons than historical and critical arguments. Even there, we would wish the critic and historian could show less wrath and impatience than breathes through the pages of the Abate Gioberti.

In the first place, then, we cannot admit that the Jesuits are as essentially different from other religious orders, as their implacable antagonist contends. Every monastic institution is a "state within the state," something foreign,

if not actually hostile, to the interests of the community it nominally belongs to. Every one looks upon its advantages as of paramount importance to those of the outward world. Theirs is the cause of Heaven, before which all temporal considerations must give way. The advancement of St. Francis, St. Dominic, is as much *the* object, with their respective disciples, as the ascendancy of St. Ignatius with the inmates of the *Gesù*. These latter have marched to their goal with greater energy and consistency, nay, also with greater audacity and subtlety: consequently their success has been more rapid and uniform. The main difference between them and some of their rival communities consists in their greater fitness for the times in which they sprang up. Every order had its own age, and the Jesuits are the monks of Modern Life. The Benedictines were the monks of Feudalism; the Franciscans the monks of democratic misrule; the Jesuits are the monks of unmitigated despotism. Much of the odium inseparable from the latter-named form of government justly devolves upon the dark intriguers who are looked upon as its most active instrument and support. Had the Jesuits never been established, there would have been no lack of friars of other colours to volunteer their cooperation to tyranny. But the Company of Jesus arose with European absolutism, at the close of the last struggles of feudalism and democracy, in the sixteenth century. They were adopted by it as something newer and fresher, and from the very partiality shown to them by the despotic ruler arose the hatred and jealousy of all other fraternities, no less than the mistrust and execration of the suffering multitude.

For the rest, every order of monks invariably developed Jesuitical tendencies. To rule by *fas* and *nefas* was a common aim with them all. The Benedictines set no limits to their towering ambition. The day was when two-thirds of the landed property in Europe had, through their encroachments, fallen into the hands of the church. Feudal and

jurisdictional rights, and much of the splendour, with all the power, of royalty were, by these votaries of poverty and humility, claimed as their own. And how did they use their advantages? Read the apology of the order, by Don Luigi Tosti, himself a monk of Montecassino*.

By the perpetration of their vows,—it results from his own testimony—by the exclusion of all candidates of the middle and lower orders, by their wealth and luxury, the monks of St. Benedict most shamefully broke through the rules laid down by their benevolent institutor. They proved themselves the most unbrotherly community, the weakest and most improvident masters, the most inhuman and improvident politicians. Like the popes, and all other ecclesiastical potentates, they hastened their fall even while striving to avert it by the ruin of all around them. Certainly never was power more unlawfully, more hypocritically, more unaccountably usurped, never was it more flagrantly abused.

Nor were their services to the cause of literature of so great an importance as to induce us to overlook their political misconduct; nor did their vices and crimes as monks, in any manner aid their work as treasurers of learning. Had their vows been more strictly adhered to, had they carefully abstained from political broils and turmoils, had they employed in libraries only one-tenth of the wealth they lavished in the erection of fortresses, had they consecrated to writing only one-tenth of the time they wasted in their pitiful intrigues, their very poverty and humility would have secured the inviolability of their sacred retreats;—books and parchments, had they been their only riches, would hardly have tempted the cupidity even of Hungarians and Saracens. Strange and melancholy to reflect upon! Had the Benedictines only been true to

* "Storia della Badia di Monte Cassino di D. Luigi Tosti, Cassinese." A History of Monte Cassino, with Notes and Documents. 3 vols. 8vo. Illustrated Edition. Naples, 1843.

St. Benedict, we should hardly have one of our classical losses to lament!

The day of these cowled aristocrats was, however, soon over. Their pride, their depravity, their rivalries and dissensions, and the gradual enlightening of after generations, stripped them of a lustre that never became them. Besides, they belonged to feudalism, and perished with it. St. Francis and St. Bonaventura drove them from their seat. On the first awakening of a free spirit in the Italian municipalities, the Franciscan cowl rose above mitre and crosier. They were of the people, and triumphed with it. They meddled in its tumultuous assemblies, followed in its warlike expeditions, blessed its standard, shared its victories and reverses. They swarmed upon it like locusts, ate it out of house and home, coaxed or bullied it into penitence, that is, into lavish bounties to their cellars and larders. They defiled its churches with relics and idols, bewildered its understanding with dreams and legends, pampered its laziness with fasts and feasts, harassed its conscience with phantoms and terrors. Their influence was as wide and long-lived as the sway of the multitude itself. They were crushed with it: with it they sunk into utter insignificance, on the decline of municipal freedom. They were too hopelessly identified with, perhaps too honestly attached to, the people, to desert it in its misery. They are still a part of it. The air of narrow lanes and alleys in crowded cities, or of the poor hamlets in barren mountain districts, is their vital element. They can breathe nowhere else.

The Jesuits, on the contrary, came up in an age of refinement and corruption. With a feline instinct they shunned the contamination of vulgar contact, they loved to luxuriate in purple and ermine, even as the disciples of St. Francis delighted to wallow in squalor and dirt. The dainty Jesuits had a vocation for the court. They felt nowhere at home, save in the palace of the great.

A hold of the ruler's conscience was worth all the popularity their cowled brethren might enjoy with the abject multitude. Hence the ease and rapidity of their promotion. They had only one mind and heart to subdue. Call the despot to account at the confessional; pour the unction of flattering words on the rankling wounds of his conscience. Ease him, reconcile him to his darling sin; smooth the path to heaven before him. Bid him deliver his youthful heir to your teaching. Extend your watchful control over his courtiers and councillors. Invade, in fact, his council chamber, and drive any one else from his attendance. You his body-guard, his advisers, his guardian angels, his tutelar demons. What matters the suffrage of all the rest of mankind? The multitude is no longer in being. Follow the policy of the Roman tyrant. Secure the loftiest heads, and take no heed of the common herd.

It is thus that every order followed its own instincts, and was true to its origin. The Jesuits, growing under the shadow of silent despotism, flourished so far only as despotism extended, and no further. They fell under Ganganelli, when the advancement of knowledge began to awaken the continental nations to a sense of their rights and interests. They were utterly annihilated in the subsequent period of the French Revolution, which levelled with the ground the last relics of absolute power. They followed in the train of retrograde monarchs at the restoration, they made their appearance at Turin, at Modena, wherever a despot flattered himself he could make a stand against the progress of the age. In vain! the noontide glare of the nineteenth century is too strong for such ill-omened birds. Twice scared from France, from Spain, and Belgium, they cling fast to their last hold of Italy and Rome. In vain do they reform their tactics and return to the charge under new colours. The very King of Sardinia disavows them! A universal outcry for their final destruction is storming the very gates of the Vatican.

No pope could save them. Pius IX. himself has, perhaps, no sympathy for them. The mere attempt would demolish at one stroke the prodigious edifice of his popularity. All that is yet wanting is time and leisure to dictate the Bull that is to rid the earth of their presence.

The press throughout Italy, at Rome itself, is insolent in the confidence of certain success. Squibs and libels against the detestable order are sold at the very doors of St. Peter's, stuck up at the very walls of the *Gesù*. Not one soul to endeavour to avert their fate, none to mourn over it. Regret for their loss may be in the heart of some of the Italian princes; but no utterance to such feeling will be allowed. The spirit of the age compels them to the self-mutilation of a most efficient limb, and that without hesitation, without one word of repining.

In so far, therefore, we look upon the portentous sum of atrocious charges brought against the Jesuits by Gioberti, as a work of supererogation. Bad as the Company were, they had no strength, no existence of their own. They were merely the shadow of tyranny; null in itself, and vanishing into nothing, on the removal of the opaque body. The Jesuits were only strong through the weakness and ignorance of enslaved nations. Before even a moderate freedom of opinion they could not stand an hour. It is idle, we believe, to look upon the present Swiss question, or upon the alarm of the French and Belgian universities, as an exception to our sweeping conclusion. The forest Cantons of Switzerland never knew the advantages of an unshackled press, never provided the means of popular education. There, as well as in France and Belgium, the lowest classes are still under the sway of Egyptian darkness. Not the Jesuits alone, but the whole Catholic hierarchy are battling with light. The publication of books and papers is not likely to exercise any beneficial influence, where the Confessor puts his veto on his penitent's literary propensities. No education has been found practicable under the sway of the Roman Catholic priesthood; none,

at least, that exceeded the reading of the Church Catechism and the legendary of the Saints. Even instruction of this nature is doled out with an unwilling hand. The Austrian government itself, true to the material well-being of his subjects, finds it expedient to afford his subjects a more extensive education than the Priesthood would approve of.

These remarks, however, would lead us into a more general question than the mere expediency of a general abolition of Jesuitism. Indeed, it is the vital question with Italy. Once the Jesuits disposed of, will progress be found compatible with Catholicism, as it now exists, or else, what other reforms may be judged indispensable?

Gioberti has no hesitation on the subject. With the exception of the Jesuits alone (and these only after their attack on his first work) there is nothing in the Catholic edifice not only repugnant, but even not immediately conducive to social advancement and freedom. Christianity, the Church, or Popery (for the three words have for him but one meaning), is identical with civilisation. No religion can be without social progress, no social progress without religion. The arguments by which he follows the march of this Christian civilisation throughout its successive phases is sufficiently remarkable. It is a humanisation of the Deity: the fulfilment of God's will, the incarnation of his word. Through it, the Almighty carried out his beneficial designs upon the human races, overcoming, one by one, the obstacles that human perversity raised against it. In the first place, and in the earliest epochs, it vanquished Paganism, it bore off the palm of relentless persecution, it overcame the tendencies to heresy, which from its very origin ancient sophistry bred in its bosom. In its second period, it struggled with and subdued the barbarism of the Northern nations. In its third stage, it contended with and triumphed over Mohammedan barbarism. In its fourth era, it extended its victories over the Mongolian races. The next generation witnessed its success against feudal and imperial ambition, and again

the impiety of the Albigenses. In the ensuing age, it successfully resisted political intolerance and the Inquisition. In the seventh age, it conquered Protestantism. In the eighth, it defeated Jesuits and Jansenists. During the tenth period, it came off conqueror of the false philosophy of the French Revolution. The eleventh epoch beheld its achievement against Napoleon. We are now in its twelfth period, when it asserts its ascendancy over the members of the Holy Alliance.

From this rapid sketch of one of his longest chapters, it is easy to conclude that no man could be a more thorough-going Catholic than this same Vincenzo Gioberti. From the preaching of Christ to the amnesty proclaimed by Pius IX., religion has proceeded on the most uniform, unswerving, unerring plan. The wickedness of a few designing persons, and the blindness of the great mass of mankind, have often given rise to corruption, and prepared the way for reforms. These reforms have been either violent and schismatic, as those of Luther and Calvin, and these have led not only to disorder and confusion in the Church itself, but even they have forced backward, or led astray, the march of human improvement: all that is not Catholic is necessarily retrograde—Or the reforms have been rational and conciliatory, such as those adopted by the Council of Trent, and these have restored the Church to all its compactness and soundness, and enabled it to show the superiority of its institutions, not only in dogmatical and hierarchical matters, but in their social and moral influence; whereby it has gradually commanded the reverence of deluded Dissenters, all of which it must eventually recall to its bosom.

We repeat it. There is enough in the freaks and vagaries of many Protestant denominations to give a conscientious Catholic good reason to believe that the Spirit of God departed from them, when they went astray from the parent Church, and to inspire him with a confident

hope that they may, ultimately, be driven back by despair into that fold, where alone they may enjoy the ineffable calmness of a consistent and self-satisfied belief. The Church of Rome may take advantage of this disposition, if it well studies and complies with the exigencies of the present age. We conceive that Romanism may yet become Catholicism, if it meets the just expectation of modern enlightenment. We should not be surprised if, released from political difficulties, Pius IX. had life and leisure sufficient for the convocation of a New Council of Trent. The result of such a step over the Catholic and Protestant world would be above the power of conjecture. God is great, and man admits of indefinite perfectibility. But, in the event of calling together such a synod, we would venture to say, the Church of Rome would come to conclusions somewhat different from those that were agreed upon at Trent. May it please the Abate Gioberti, nine tenths of its institutions, even in the mind of good Catholics, are obsolete and mischievous. They are allowed to stand, with the whole superannuated system, whilst the night of the human understanding continues. But the Council, in the nineteenth century, would have to work in broad daylight. It might rely on the suggestions of the whole European press—and unless the result were to prove utter confusion and dispersion, as at the tower of Babel, it must end by bringing authority within the limits of reason. It will then be time to test the soundness of Gioberti's arguments in vindication of the present order of things: for although, in the abstract, he seems to approve of "rational conciliatory reforms," he does not fail, at the same time, to uphold every tenet and practice of the present Church, in all its integrity.

All the Church needs grant to the spirit of the age is, in his opinion, the expulsion of the Jesuits. All the myriads of monks, of all colours, give him no uneasiness. He does not even scruple to befriend the Capuchins.

"Although a man of the nineteenth century," says he, "I profess to love the Capuchins. The Capuchin is the Monk of the People. So long as the people exist, bound to earn their bread in the sweat of their brow, condemned to the hardships of field-labour, a religious brotherhood intended to assuage those toils by the example of greater toil and self-imposed hardships, softening their minds and ennobling them by religious consolation and advice, will always have a good moral and social effect."

All this sounds very well, in theory. But if the monastic hardships are limited to the wearing of cowls and sandals, if the religious comfort and counsel consists of a tissue of monstrous legends and miracles, of a petty traffic of relics and *agnus Dei*, if the share in the labourer's toil is reduced to the institution of a hundred holydays, we may be allowed to call into question the moral and social good resulting from these otherwise harmless friars. After all, let the Capuchins work, instead of praying, for their own bread. All we quarrel with is their unblushing spoliation of the poor. Let them lay down their begging basket, and then preach and confess to their hearts' content. As to the nature of their doctrines, we will allow them full scope, so that they are not suffered to live on human credulity.

Most of the mendicant orders have raised a huzza for Pius IX., hailed the dawn of Italian nationality, and swelled the popular ranks in the festive pageantries lately celebrated at Florence and Rome. The emancipation of their countrymen is a subject of their sincere rejoicing. Accustomed to rule the multitude, in days of old, when the multitude held the reins of municipal government, they looked upon popular success as in some manner connected with their own advancement. They may probably soon find out their mistake. Modern liberty is based upon new and, to them, incomprehensible principles. The people, now reading and thinking, will be too knowing for them;

"Where on earth is the use," they will say, "of all these myriads of friars? What has an age of equal laws and security to do with monasteries, the asylums reared up by public piety against the violence of darkness and barbarism? What good comes of their vow of poverty, that fattens them at our expense? or of that of chastity, which endangers the peace of our families and the sanctity of our homes?" The Franciscans are less mischievous than the Jesuits, because they are too numerous to act with discretion and unity of design. Yet, omnipresent, omnipotent as they are, with the lowest classes, they present a more formidable impediment to human progress than any other fraternity. The Jesuits, at the worst, can only work in the towns, where public opinion watches, and, unless crushed by despotic might, combats them. They can only poison the minds of the youths of the higher classes, where the governments insist upon trusting them with the direction of public instruction, and so long only as the parents have no means of counteracting their influence. But the mendicant friar is left alone to deal with the people. The ignorant, defenceless, multitude is wholly at his mercy. His ascendancy over them is as unbroken as in the days of popular freedom. He haunts lonely huts or remote districts where no books or papers ever reach, where education has to struggle with want and hard labour, where shaggy and greasy, stupid and narrow-minded as he is, the monk appears, by comparison, in the light of a superior being, of a heavenly messenger. To them are owing the grovelling superstition, the trumpery and jugglery system of worship, the senseless idolatry, the laziness of the Italian populace. No mental cultivation, no decent religion, is practicable without the abolition of these often cunning, sometimes well-meaning, but invariably ignorant, "Jesuits of the people," and the substitution of an enlightened parish priesthood. It is the "peace to the priests, but a few only and quiet; and peace to the friars, so they be

unfrocked," that Alfieri so sensibly recommended to his countrymen more than half a century ago.

But we have been led into argument, in spite of ourselves, by the tenderness evinced by the Abate Gioberti for the religious institutions of Italy, such as they now be. The discussion of such matters is, however, premature. The fact to be ascertained beforehand is whether that country is now to be allowed freedom of controversy: we have no doubt the people will not fail to make the best use of so great a blessing, whenever they have secured it.

It is on this ground that the whole world is directly interested in this great question of Italian emancipation. The establishment of freedom of opinion in Italy leads to the great Catholic crisis: it will then be determined how far the Italians may adhere voluntarily to a religious system to which they have hitherto been fastened by main force; or what modifications their old national creed will have to undergo before it is fit for rational and responsible beings to acquiesce in. The establishment of a free national church in Italy, with Rome at its head, must have important results on the several regions of the Christian world which have hitherto continued true to their Catholic allegiance: and the adoption of liberal measures in the Catholic communion may, in the end, bring it so near the views of the less bigoted Protestant denominations, that a universal reconciliation may become as practicable as it is desirable—as it is, in fact, wished for in many quarters.

It is, meanwhile, not unimportant to observe, that the benevolent and enlightened Pius has given no reason that the world may suspect any disposition on his part towards ecclesiastical reforms. His measures, hitherto, have been directed merely to the political improvement of his states. the great reputation he enjoys for deep, heart-felt piety may be interpreted in more than one way. Much could not be expected in so short a time in the midst of such

serious difficulties. But if the newspapers are to be relied upon, his differences with Austria, respecting the occupation of Ferrara, are about to be brought to an amicable arrangement: the commotion arising from that first breach of the peace will then speedily subside; and, reassured from all dangers from abroad, he will find himself at liberty to provide for the spiritual no less than for the temporal well-being of his people. The Italians, we trust, will not be wanting to themselves in this emergency; and since their rulers are willing to allow them the utterance of their wishes and hopes, since Austria has lost the power of throwing her ponderous sword into the balance of their native governments, we expect they will fearlessly vindicate their claims to as distinguished a place among the nations of Europe as Providence may yet allot them. They may not actually be promoted to such high destinies as the author of the "Primato" fondly anticipates. And yet, if they can solve the great religious problem more satisfactorily than either England or Germany have done hitherto—if they can show the rare instance of a unanimous church combined with unlimited toleration and fearless inquiry—they will not fail once more to exercise that blissful ascendancy, to which the world was twice indebted for its social and moral redemption.

The latter part of Gioberti's work on the Jesuits assumes a less dignified but perhaps more amusing character. It is made up of numberless petty anecdotes, all the gossip and scandal with which the Italian towns are rife with regard to the Jesuits. The author insists upon the necessity of extending his remarks upon Jesuitism to many private and public associations that bear not its name: such are many of the *Congreghe* and *Congregazioni*, generally made up by lay brothers in almost every community, and those fashionable nunneries, known under the name of *Doroteine*, or nuns of St. Dorothy, sisters of the *Sacro Cuore*, and even sisters of charity, all of whom Gioberti

hesitates not to represent as so many she-Jesuits. The baseness and cunning of their intrigues, the air of mystery enveloping all their proceedings, and the many instances of their abuse of religion to shameful and iniquitous ends, are illustrated and enumerated by the author with a raciness, a liveliness of style, enhancing by its piquancy the bitterness of feeling which gave rise to the work. Gioberti aspires to the glory of a wag no less than of a thinker: and a few extracts in that vein might possibly afford entertainment to some of our readers. Not so to us. The prostration of the human understanding, under the influence of religious perversion, is a subject of melancholy reflection. No one laughs at such exposures but the unbeliever. Popery and Jesuitism also, says the sceptic, began with the gospel. And are these the results of God's teaching?

CHAPTER XI.

D'AZEGLIO.

Rise of Public Opinion in Italy since 1814—Efforts for the Establishment of Intellectual and Moral Unity—State of Public Opinion since the Accession of Pius IX.—The Programme of the Italian Patriots—D'Azeglio.

THE rise of Italian nationality has been gradual but unremitting. Every event which took place in Italy since 1814 announced the prevailing ascendancy of thought, and every act of emancipated thought has been turned to the spread of national feelings. The yearly meetings of Italian scholars and scientific men, since 1839—the treaty of literary alliance, by which the privilege of copyright was extended to the whole country—are all the results of the combined efforts of all good men to *Italianize Italy*.

The advantages to be realised by these apparently trifling measures could not immediately be appreciated without a knowledge of the full extent of the evils by which the country was afflicted. The Italians felt that they had every thing to hope from a spirit of national association; they thought that nothing could, in peaceful times, be more directly conducive to that happy result than the unity of mental pursuits, the *assimilation* of the national language, the centralisation of science and literature, and the compilation of national history.

Yet even to the attainment of these harmless, and,

apparently, unmeaning objects, the institutions of their governments opposed the most serious obstacles.

Copyright in Italy was secured to the author or editor, only within the narrow district in which his work was published. He knew full well that, at the distance of twenty or thirty miles, there was a number of piratical printers, lawfully entitled to seize upon his property as soon as it obtained any degree of popularity; and, as the sale of books—except in the kingdom of Naples, where they pay a heavy duty—was commercially free, those piracies were put forth and circulated under the very eyes of the author. A name of the highest standing was no protection against this impudent system of depredation. Botta, an exile, was obliged to sell in Paris, as waste paper, the splendid French edition of his history of Italy; while Swiss or Italian booksellers were making their fortunes by an uninterrupted series of its republications. Manzoni received from his publisher a trifling sum for the manuscript of the "Promessi Sposi," and that only as a present; and in vain did Pellico, at every new work he produced, urge a moral duty of respecting a privilege which constitutes nowadays a part of the rights of nations, and request the gentlemen of the press not to defraud him of the honest recompense of his labour.

Such an evil was not, indeed, unattended by some salutary effects. Literature in Italy was never reduced to the level of a trade. It could only be cultivated by men of independent fortune. The Italian princes were no longer in a condition to hire the pens of mercenary writers; and, upon the maxim of the Republic of Venice, they wished their governments never to be spoken of either in praise or censure.

The "Voce della Verità," and similar organs of government, by dwelling too freely on topics of national interest, have already, to a great extent, served the cause they were

intended to oppose. The rights of absolute power are best advocated by absolute silence. Consequently, all court poets and historiographers have long ago been silenced. Even had there been writers in Italy willing to sell their productions, it would not have been easy to find a purchaser. Flattery was a merchandise equally discredited by power and public opinion.

Literature, in consequence, although oppressed and fettered, was yet more dignified and uncorrupted than in many free countries; it followed not the capricious opinions of the multitude, but it marched at the head of social movement, a stern censor, dictating and ruling with an authority, which the consciousness of its irreprehensibility gave it a right to exert.

Since the year 1814, no immoral book of any note has issued from the press in Italy. All have been directed to one leading object—the severe reformation of moral principles. This was no doubt partly the consequence of the censorship, which was exercised with equal vigilance in all Italian states, and which, in a political point of view, every freeman cordially detested. But as it is in the secret ways of Providence to turn an instrument of evil into an agent of good, it cannot be doubted that Italian morals have benefited by that restriction; and, however true may be the descriptions of Italian profligacy given every day by French and English travellers, still it is consoling to think that the Italians have no such teachers of morals as Bulwer or Ainsworth, Paul de Kock or Victor Hugo.

Italy, moreover, possessed no centre of literature, no such literary metropolis as Paris, London, or Edinburgh; no literary fair, such as is yearly held in Leipsic or Dresden. The journals, which might have exercised a general influence on the whole country, such as the "Conciliatore," the "Antologia," and the "Subalpino," were successively suppressed; and the numberless literary periodicals which

continued in our days with rare perseverance, were conducted with a timidity and narrow-mindedness which alone, in the actual state of things, secured their existence.

Consequently every town or province in Italy was kept in a perfect state of ignorance of the progress of its immediate neighbours. All efforts tending to establish an Italian periodical bibliography were void of effect.

It could not, therefore, be surprising to hear how slow the progress of new ideas must be in that country. The most popular works, novels, and poems, even when not rigorously proscribed, were often translated into all foreign languages before they were generally known in Italy. But such works as the "Romanze" of Berchet, or the songs of Giusti, must literally fight their way into the country.

Those poems published in London, or otherwise at Lugano, in Switzerland, were circulated for many years in manuscript, learned by heart, and transmitted from town to town by enthusiastic admirers, after the manner of ancient minstrels, ere a single printed copy could obtain admission into that iron-fenced garden of Europe.

These very impediments, however, thus thrown in the way of publication, frustrated the intent of those who created them. The works that government proscribed had, like all other forbidden fruits, a peculiar relish. The censure of the Tuscan police made the fortune of Guerrazzi's "Assedio di Firenze." By their jealousy and suspicion, the government showed where lay their vulnerable side. Literary reputations, confirmed by so many years of struggle and trial, were based on a more solid ground. The writer in Italy was oftentimes looked upon as a hero and martyr; and his words went forth like the voice of an oracle.

The want of free circulation and literary commerce had also the advantage of deterring mediocrity from forcing itself into public notice. All modern productions must

undergo a process, which nothing but the purest ore could withstand.

If we appear to look on the better side of the national calamities of Italy, it is because the people of that country began, at last, to anticipate a better state of things; because it seemed that from that mutual compact between the different states, providing for the security of literary property all over the country, and by that congress of *savants* of every province, they were entitled to expect that their governments would be finally compelled to acknowledge the force of social progress, and to give way before its irresistible tendencies.

This undeniable improvement in the intellectual and moral condition of Italy had so long been either wilfully overlooked by foreign visitors, or otherwise hastily attributed to those very causes by which all social movement was most forcibly opposed.

Men were found who did not hesitate to assert that the Austrian rule was a blessing of Heaven to civilise and humanise Italy: who, by a comparison between the administration of the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, and that of the now bigoted, now absurdly tyrannical, but always improvident and imbecile princes, calling themselves independent, did not hesitate to infer that the Italians were unfit to govern themselves, and that every attempt at improvement must invariably receive its first start under Austrian auspices.

We had always believed—if one may be allowed to speak for the many—in an Italian progress, exclusively resulting from the energy of the soundest part of the population: we had always thought that it would be obvious to every impartial observer, that powerful and immortal elements of cohesion and vitality must remain in a country doomed to bear so long an hour of trial: we wondered what other nation might have been able to

withstand the combined evils of long division and thraldom —the repeated calamities of invasion and war—the constant influence of a crafty, bigoted, and powerful priesthood, and yet preserve all the outward aspect of growth and prosperity, and closely follow their more fortunate transalpine and transmarine neighbours, in science, letters, and arts. We looked at Spain, not earlier than three centuries ago the mistress of both continents; the ruler of the destinies of the globe; the first destroyer of Italy; Spain, always preserving its integrity and independence, and yet, without any external impulse, by one of the many calamities which she had in common with Italy—popery, brought down from her height of power, and plunged into such a depth of ignorance and misery, that it may be doubted whether any constitution will ever redeem her.

We then turned to the dignified behaviour of the Milanese in presence of their foreign rulers, and their mute but firm protest against that time-sanctioned infringement of their national right, by a jealous and obstinate avoidance of all intercourse with the hated Austrian soldiery; and we were reminded of the twice subdued, and thrice fermenting Romagna, and of the imposing apparatus by which Austria finds it necessary, in the midst of peace, to turn the whole of the Lombard plain into a vast casern;—when we considered all this, we flattered ourselves that every one might suspect that there was no good understanding between us and our governments; we thought that it would be evident that the genius and energies of the nation must be crushed by so rigid a system of suspicion and force; and that to such a state of things all social evil in Italy must be essentially attributed.

We might praise the uprightness and sincerity of writers, who, labouring at the preservation of European peace; feeling the immediate advantages resulting from the amicable relation of their governments with Austria,

considered it as unwise and treacherous to hold out any hope of cooperation to the patriots of Italy; and who dwelt on the political necessity that restrained the free nations of Europe from interfering in their behalf; but when we heard others insisting on the right that the Austrians had to force their sleepy rule on a nation so entirely their opposite in character, spirit, and genius, as we are, and unblushingly congratulating us on the "slow, but sure system of civilisation that we were undergoing under Austrian paternity," we could not help being reminded of that generous animal that administered the last kick to the lion brought down by his rivals, and lying wounded and helpless in his death throes.

It was thus that travellers seemed to conspire to dishearten a people who had already so many causes to despair of their country—that they contributed to keep alive the national ill-will that is ever rankling in the bosom of all European families.

Had they studied Italy, free from illiberal prepossessions; had they sounded the depth of that "happy order and silence" that reigns at Milan, they would have found a people anxious and restless—perplexed by vague, but intense longings for greatness—aiming at high, but often impracticable undertakings—striving by fits and starts to follow the European movement, but falling midway, sinking under the weight of a thousand shackles, which it must drag along in its movements.

They would have seen in all those roads across the Apennines, along the sea-shore, in those rival lines of steamers plying along the coasts of the Mediterranean, on the Po and the Adriatic, in those first attempts at railroads to Castellamare and Monza, that the spirit of enterprise arose invariably from private association, and received but a late and reluctant sanction from the mistrusting governments.

Above all things, they would have been aware that the

first meeting of Italian scientific men at Pisa, and the new understanding between some of the Italian governments, concerning a mutual guarantee of literary property, were to be merely considered as results of that new spirit of life and activity irresistibly felt throughout the country, and having power to bend to its views even the weighty deliberations of the Aulic council at Vienna.

These mutual compacts, establishing the foundation of scientific and literary unity, which the Italian, last of all civilised governments, had finally been shamed into; to which some of the most obstinate, nominally the old pope and the Duke of Modena, still sturdily denied their countenance, were only a first step, and one, apparently, of very secondary importance. But the Italians were not, as it proved, wholly wrong when they expected from it more momentous consequences than it was given to the authors of those measures to anticipate.

The people of that country felt, above all things, the want of unanimity.

Not, indeed, that the resentment of ancient republican grudges, or even the narrow-minded feelings of mutual mistrust and contempt between the different provinces, could be said to exist to any great extent in our days, whatever may be the notions of prejudiced travellers on that subject.

But the Italians had been so long estranged from each other; the name of their country had been so long buried in oblivion; their local interests had been so artfully directed into different and opposite channels, that their patriotic ideas—I speak of the unenlightened classes—had still something vague and undetermined: the natural boundaries of the country seemed to shift from one district to another, so as to induce the traveller to conclude that, geographically as well as politically, there is no Italy.

To efface from the minds of the people these last remnants of illiberal provincialisms, rather engendered by ig-

norance than ill-will; to foster the redeeming idea of Italian nationality, the intelligent classes in Italy were actively employed.

To bring about the reform and enfranchisement of the national language, the works of Perticari, Monti, Cesari, and other philological writers, have assiduously contributed since the beginning of the nineteenth century. They have hastened the downfal of that old edifice of pedantry, by which the Academy della Crusca had brought the Italian language to a dead stand. The still surviving universities, no less than the primary and infant schools—recently disseminated wherever they did not, as at Rome, meet with unconquerable opposition on the part of the government—have left nothing unattempted to bring the most uncouth dialects to the level of the purest Tuscan standard. The vocabularies of the Venetian, Sicilian, and every other provincial *patois*, printed with a view to aid the people in their acquirement of the written language, and the republication of Italian dictionaries at Bologna, Verona, Naples, and Padua, announced a new fact, about which foreigners never entertained any doubt, but which, as we have said, had never been sufficiently established in Italy since the age of Dante—that there is an Italian language.

The annual meeting of eminent scientific men at one of the several universities of the country, had a most salutary effect on the progress of science, by enabling the most active scholars to meet, to count, to understand, and mutually appreciate each other by the assurance of the reward of national suffrage, which awaits the result of their efforts at every reunion of that scientific diet.

It would be difficult to express with what extraordinary enthusiasm several hundred *savants*, the representatives of the aristocracy of the mind in Italy, have been yearly convening from the remotest provinces to make the enumeration of the services rendered by their forefathers to the interests of science—to lay the first stone of monuments

to be erected to their memory—to demonstrate, by their own endeavours, that science in Italy is certainly neither in a backward nor yet in a stationary condition: and whoever reflects that this is the first time, perhaps, since the days of Pico della Mirandola, that the Italians have been convoked even for so innocent a purpose, will easily sympathise with a people so placed, as to hail the meeting of a few professors and scholars as a national triumph, and make it a subject of universal rejoicing.

The privilege of copyright has immediately brought the interests of the different petty literary centres of Turin, Milan, Venice, Florence, &c., to a common understanding, secured the free circulation, at least, of all the works published in the country; whilst the increase of daily, weekly, and monthly periodicals, hastened and extended their diffusion, and laid the basis of a universal Italian bibliography. For hitherto the Italian despots did not even agree in their system of oppression, or rather, they were sometimes pleased to flatter their subjects by a little display of comparative mildness, and indulge in the specious illusion of a precarious independence. But the equitable intercourse of literary commerce, necessarily attendant upon a mutual guarantee of copyright, soon brought a beneficial uniformity in the police regulations of the different states; and the Italians were not, as we may see, too sanguine in their expectations, when they hoped that the decree on literary property might be considered as a first step towards the establishment of a moderate freedom of the press.

A higher tone of daring opinion and free discussion was already prevailing in some of the periodicals that enjoyed the greatest degree of popularity, especially the "Politecnico," and the "Rivista Europea," at Milan. It was a melancholy spectacle to see how many evasive, elusive devices those unhappy writers were compelled to resort

to, in order to baffle the watchfulness, the obstinacy, the extravagance of those ignorant turnkeys of public opinion. Truly, notwithstanding the precautions and restrictions adopted by those journals, few or none could boast of steering clear of the breakers that beset their progress. Every day tidings were brought us of the sinking of some of those that seemed to sail most exultingly, borne by wind and tide. But, soon after their downfal, other equally devoted believers were seen spreading their canvas, and venturing once more on their track.

Thus the symptoms of an intellectual revolution were already every where apparent in Italy. Every where the patriots seemed to be impressed with a leading idea—that mental emancipation must necessarily be the forerunner of civil enfranchisement: that by asserting their common origin, by establishing bonds of literary association, by interchanging feelings of mutual fraternity and sympathy, by appealing to the common testimonials of their former greatness—they might lay the basis of future Italian nationality; that by the instrument of popular instruction, by the influence of their exhortation and example, they might raise the uneducated classes from their state of languor and stupor, and lead them to feel, to resist, and to will; that they might, by the consciousness of their unanimity, revive that faith and hope which frequent reverses had shaken, and which alone could command success.

But if, on the one hand, it was with every virtuous Italian a matter of religious belief, that his country would one day be called to a better destiny—it was, on the other hand, hardly possible to determine on what inscrutable designs the fulfilment of God's will might depend, what instruments he might choose to his work of redemption, how long this hour of severe probation might yet endure.

Nor could it be dissembled that contrary elements were,

in the meanwhile, as actively, and, if not more successfully, at least more freely at work.

The superstitious ceremonies; the dangerous tenets of a corrupt religion, so easily turned into a source of deception by adroit and unprincipled ministers; the recurrence of frequent religious solemnities, daily instituted by royal hypocrites; the canonisation of new saints; the enforcement of sacramental practices, which gave reason to apprehend the reestablishment of the Inquisition, at least in Turin; the slow and silent, but sure reinstalment of the Jesuits, notwithstanding the most violent resistance they met with at Parma, Vicenza, and Verona;—every measure seemed intended to revive the age of ignorance and fanaticism.

Still late events had sufficiently demonstrated that the superstition of the people was but a weak and faithless support to the cause of despotism; and, without the aid of foreign interference, no priestly contrivance could have prevented the pope, and the whole Catholic system, from yielding to the attacks of the insurgents of central Italy in 1831.

An open resistance was not, therefore, so much to be apprehended on the part of the multitude, as that apathy and passivity to which they had been trained for centuries. It had hitherto opposed its material force of inertia to all innovations, of which no one as yet had made them sufficiently feel the advantages.

It must not be forgotten that the policy of Austria, and of its dependent governments, has ever been to flatter and pamper the lowest classes by ministering to their idle propensities; so that, whilst the populace was in general more wretchedly fed and clad in Italy than in any other Christian community, still it was not altogether the most discontented or unhappy, or was, at least, very far from referring its sufferings to the real cause.

Neither was this to be said only of the populace; but,

amongst all ranks, whoever consented to forego the dignity, the energy, the pride, the noblest attributes of man; whoever presumed not to make use of the understanding and free will by which Providence raised him above the level of brutes, was, in Italy, more than any where else, allowed to vegetate and fatten undisturbed.

Hence, the inactivity, the indulgence in gross epicurism, the frivolous pleasures in which the great majority of our countrymen miserably wasted their existence, and which had been vaguely attributed to the enervating influence of a southern climate, as if under that same sun, and in that same latitude, the most frugal and industrious, as well as the bravest people, had not, in other times, been known to thrive.

The most active mind felt confined and circumscribed within the close boundaries of those petty states. It sunk under the consciousness of its insufficiency. It yielded before the well-experienced invincibility of the obstacles it had to contend with. A general discouragement, listlessness, and ennui prevailed all over the country, especially south of the Apennines, only interrupted by the shouts of maddening joy at carnival, or the mummeries of a doting religion at Easter. The foreign tourist who landed in Italy, his head surfeited with classical traditions of Roman or Florentine greatness; the weary exile who revisited his native land, his head still dizzy with the whirl of social movement he had witnessed abroad, could hardly reconcile himself to the idea that that was the Italy whose name had power to call forth such glorious remembrances, or such sanguine expectations.

It seemed as if the very buildings, the very land, bore the marks of a slow decay, of a lingering death. You would have said that even the Arno and Tiber had dwindled into two muddy, insignificant streamlets, as if to break the spell of grandeur and majesty attached to their names.

Hence, although the cause of the country might, to a considerable extent, be considered as having overcome all moral resistance; although the desire of Italian nationality lay latent but inextinguishable in every heart—yet the efforts of active patriotism were counteracted by a vague despondency, by an insane and guilty neutrality, and, above all, by that individualism which seems to be the besetting sin of our age; but which, of course, must be more powerful where public spirit was utterly discountenanced by despotism.

In France, in Spain, in all independent countries, the will of a few well-meaning philanthropists, and the acquiescence of the masses, would be more than sufficient to secure success. But in Italy there was a dead weight of brutal force, the preponderance of a colossal power, which there was no chance of overthrowing until the few patriots that constituted the soul of the nation had communicated their sense and life to the unwieldy body of the people, and forced it, willing or unwilling, into action.

The revolution of Italy has at last commenced in good earnest. Public opinion has made rapid, decisive strides. Even before any alteration in the law of censorship had taken place, the Press of 1846 was no longer the same as in 1831; the works of Gioberti and Balbo—the patriotic novels and political pamphlets of Massimo d'Azeglio—were either printed or freely circulated in Italy; their authors were not only breathing at liberty, but, in some instances, countenanced and befriended by princes. These are no longer the times when the most frequented shop in Naples was closed merely because it had the words "Caffè d'Italia" written over the door; all is now "national"—all "Italian." Every new coffee-house, at Turin or Florence, is made to bear the auspicious name of *Caffè Gioberti*. The London tradesmen are no more fond of displaying the royal arms above their shop-windows than

the Italian houses, railway companies, and insurance offices, are proud of the fair name of Italy. Hardly one of the exiles, excepting, perhaps, Mr. Mazzini, but has either been recalled or suffered to repatriate on the slightest hint of his desire.

But it is not by mere sufferance, not by a mere compromise, that the Italians can be rescued from ignominy. It has pleased Providence to humble that nation to the dust. The Italians were, to a great extent, willing slaves; freed from their worst fears, they were still fettered by hopes; the smiles of their princes were more demoralising than their frowns; Italy had no less than eight courts, each of them fatal to public morality; swarms of needy candidates were grovelling there, vieing in dastardly dissimulation, in abject servility, to qualify themselves for preferment. It is from this vile apprenticeship of hypocrisy that Italian society received its tone of exaggerated suspicion and cautiousness. It was only to the base court-minions, and sycophantic office-hunters that the omnipresent *spia* or informer was truly redoubtable.

The Marquis d'Azeglio preached it to his countrymen in glorious words. There is a limit to tyranny! The days of Neros and Ezzelino da Romanos are long since gone by! The most wilful of despots is hemmed in by a broad noontide glare! The eyes of the civilised world are upon him! The opinion of Europe is too strong for him! Behold! the almighty Nicholas himself is fain to plead, through his agents, his cause before that awful tribunal—the London *Times!* Be daring! Lift up your countenance. Bear your heart and soul on your brows. Feelings, wishes, and thoughts are no crimes, even in the foulest code of law. Your uncompromising confidence will call forth equal frankness from others. The mask of pusillanimity will drop from every face. You will count each other, see yourselves formidable in your numbers.

The prince has no dungeon or scaffold for so many of you. Be firm! Be unanimous! Dare him to do his worst! Crush him by the consciousness of his awful minority.

We are, in good earnest, firm believers in the omnipotence of passive resistance. Wherever public opinion is allowed free scope—wherever universal suffrage can make its way to the throne, by the means of collective petitions, it were idle, as it were criminal, to have recourse to violent measures. If the Italians had power to conspire with a raised visor, and before the face of the sun, there would be an end for ever of *Carbonarism and Young Italy*.

Now it is, indeed, impossible for a prince, in Christian Europe, to make himself inaccessible to the unanimous wish of his people. The sound majority is as sure to rule, by indirect influence, under the most uncompromising despotism, as by well-defined and acknowledged rights, under the most enlightened representative government; in short, no monarch can play the wolf, except in so far as his subjects show a disposition to make themselves sheep. There is no δημοβόρος βασιλεὺς, unless οὐτιδανοῖσιν ἀνάσσει.

Italy is and has long been, however, in an exceptional state, groaning under a twofold yoke. She had two masters to serve—the one at hand and visible, the other remote and intangible. The Italian princes themselves scarcely dared to call the air they breathed their own. They might listen to the supplications of their subjects, acknowledge the justice of their complaints, long to redress their grievances; their paternal heart might bleed for them; relief, however, they could afford none; they could allow no free vent to popular discontent. Willing or unwilling they must crush public opinion, and resist all utterance of popular feelings.

This apparent harshness on the part of their local dominators repeatedly drove the Italians to deeds of despair. Like trodden vipers, they naturally enough turned their resentment against the foot that weighed them down. But

on the very first show of their fangs the reluctant trampler withdrew, and the real conculcator stepped forward to his crushing work. Then there was appalling accumulation of evil. Death-like silence ensued. The best-meaning prince was blanched with dismay. He sought his own safety in an exaggerated display of severity, for well he knew any leniency on his part would be visited with as hot a displeasure as insubordination on the part of the subjects.

Oh, Italians! is now the cry of the moderate party, behold the position in which your recourse to physical force has placed your national rulers. Turn all your resentment against your common oppressor, and spare the blind instruments in his hands. Let bygones be bygones, and let every lover of Italy rally round the throne of its lawful sovereigns. Let your peaceful demeanour reassure —disarm them. In your union with them you are strong. Backed by your unanimous suffrage, they are a match for all the powers of evil. Pledge yourselves to the mere exercise of MORAL FORCE. Check their abuse of power by a well-planned system of PASSIVE RESISTANCE. Give no reasonable ground for the armed interference of foreign powers. Away with the tenebrous plots of *subterranean Italy!* Away with the vain vociferations of aimless insurrections! The prevalence of public order gives you all the strength of union; it removes every pretext for Austrian aggression, and, what is more dangerous, for French protectorate. It commands the respect, conciliates the good-will of all Europe in your behalf.

It has been done! Between the Italian people, and three at least of their most powerful princes, good understanding has been established. By a silent covenant three states have actually emancipated themselves. Rome, Sardinia, and Tuscany, with Lucca added to this last, are pledged to each other's protection. Each of them has, as a necessary consequence, in unequivocal terms,

proclaimed his devotion to the welfare of the people to a certain extent. They have given an earnest of their good disposition to inquire into and provide for the wants of their subjects. No more needs be exacted from them. The rest must be done by the people themselves. Opinion can never go back in Italy, if the Italians will only be true to their cause!

Such was the prelude of the great moral revolution in Italy. D'Azeglio wrote to this effect, and acted up to his words. He printed such sentiments at Turin, even before Pius IX. was raised to the pontificate, nor was there ever a *sbirro* rash enough to touch him*.

But there were not many at the time who would venture to follow. Servitude in Italy dates centuries back: the people were trained in no other school. Despotism, whatever may be said of Russia, will never prevail in a large state, consistently with a certain degree of civilisation. The waters of a vast ocean never stagnate. It is only in a slough of despond, in a petty community deprived of great resources and spirit of enterprise, where every educated man is brought into contact, and made a hanger on the fountain-head of all honours and emoluments, that the noblest spirit is corrupted from the very cradle, bribed even more than broken into a craven and false exaggeration of loyalty, where, in his selfish worldliness, the office-seeker stoops even lower than tyranny would trample him. Nothing is more difficult than to cure a coward of his abjectness, and there is a social no less than a personal cowardice. Against such inveterate evil we know of no remedy, save unconditional, well-established, chartered liberty. Truth is a tender plant in Italy, dreading the open air. It is for the ruler to screen and foster it in the hot-house of liberal laws.

Consequently, all the reforms the Italian patriots aim

* "Degli Ultimi Casi di Romagna di Massimo d'Azeglio," Lugano, 1846.

at for the present are even less than those that might contribute to the material welfare of the people, than such as can best lead to the regeneration of their national character. They aspire, above all things, to their own *rehabilitation* before their European brethren. They wish to strengthen their "moral sense," to escape from the consciousness of their degradation, to raise themselves in their own estimation.

Crushed under a senseless, arbitrary rule, and unable to struggle against it by open force, the Italians had too long recourse to the only weapon of the weak—cunning. Resistance to the laws by evasion or subterfuge was, for centuries, numbered among the patriotic virtues. The Italians were forcibly trained to that school of simulation and dissimulation, which seemed at last *bred in the bone* with them, and which has been considered as innate and instinctive with them by men who were not willing to refer it to its real causes.

Freedom of opinion will immediately lead to mutual confidence and sincerity. Falsehood invariably arises from cowardice, and the Italians are tired of hearing it said that their enslavement is but the result of their political pusillanimity—of the low standard of their public morality.

If the Italian princes are, indeed, bent towards the promotion of public welfare, or, what amounts to the same thing, if they deem it expedient to affect such a disposition, they will redeem their people by the emancipation of public opinion. The freedom of the press and a liberal system of popular education are the first pledges of their earnestness of purpose.

The laws of censorship might, perhaps, be better improved by utter abolition, than by reform or modification. No restraint on the utterance of men's minds, except the sanctity of the laws, is consistent with the spirit of progress now astir throughout Europe. The decrees lately

promulgated at Rome, Florence, and Lucca may, at the best, be considered as transitional measures. By a gradual relaxation, they must lead to a total enfranchisement. It is certainly some comfort to know that the men called to the exercise of so responsible an office as that of the censor are enlightened and amiable; it is still more consoling to feel assured that the sentence they pronounce upon the writings submitted to their judgment is neither absolute nor irrevocable. Still is the odious law in existence. The fatal power is in the hands of government; who still hold the reins of opinion, and say, "So far shalt thou go and no further."

The most liberal form of censorship will be found vexatious and dilatory. The human mind in the nineteenth century revolts against the narrow-mindedness of preventive laws. It is tired of the leading-strings it has hitherto been held in. It frets against the limits that would keep it in an endless nonage. The printing-press is a dangerous weapon—who knows it not? So are short pistols and daggers. "Shoot, stab, and be hanged," says the law. "Write, print, and be—fined," should likewise be the word. The abuse of the press must be made amenable to the laws like any other offence. Let us be fearlessly trusted with the two-edged instrument. If we use it for evil purposes, why, we are too old now to plead ignorance in extenuation of our guilt. Trespass on our part must come from sheer malice, and let the consequences be on our own head.

But even of greater importance than the liberty of the press itself is, for those small Italian states, a well-acknowledged right of petition. The Italians were not only not entitled to demand, but not even allowed to pray. Petitions could not make their way to the throne, unless from individuals, and on merely personal concerns. Collective remonstrances on public grievances, no matter on what just and humble terms, were unceremoniously rejected,

and the mere attempt at laying a petition open for signature, or calling together a meeting for that purpose, was tantamount to high treason. There is no worse deaf, says the proverb, than he who is unwilling to hear. But the Italian princes were not even willing to be spoken to. They shunned all communication with their subjects—had nothing to learn from them. Like Providence, they were all-seeing, no less than all-mighty; and they "did for their people more than they could ask, or think, or were worthy to receive." Like good shepherds, they were humane and beneficent, in proportion as the flock were reduced to the condition of *dumb* brutes.

The Italian tongues, have, to some extent, broken loose during the late commotions. At Florence and Leghorn the people have usurped their most humble prerogative. They have "asked, and it has been given to them." Most of the liberal measures lately adopted in Tuscany have been the result of collective petitions. At Turin, again, Charles Albert has visited a similar presumption with withering frowns. One of his favourite ministers, Villa Marina, is still writhing under his hot displeasure, for having made too free with his name, and adding it to a long list of many others, at the foot of a memorial, praying for the removal of an obnoxious policeman. The King of Sardinia, for one, will submit to no dictation or suggestion. Unlike a citizen-king, he will "rule as well as reign." Every reform, every liberal measure must, according to the phraseology of despotic cabinets, proceed, *motu proprio*, from his own free will and pleasure. Prayers with him are superfluous, at least, even if not altogether impertinent.

The apparent waywardness of his conduct has often mystified and perplexed friends and enemies; nothing, nevertheless, can be more straightforward and consistent than his policy, if you only get hold of the right clue to it. The only God he acknowledges and bows to is—ambition. His wish is to reign—and to reign without sharers or

rivals. He conspired with the Carbonari in 1821, when he trusted that conspiracy would open for him a short-cut to the throne. He favoured Jesuitism so long as he fancied to have found in it the best antidote to liberalism; and he discountenanced, and all but disavowed it, when he saw that dark auxiliary becoming too formidable for himself. In the same manner, he courted Austrian alliance, so long as he stood in dread of Young Italy; and he turned against that power as soon as the generous and daring Pius IX., by his firmness afforded the Italian princes a chance for asserting their independence. That Charles Albert would fain shake off every shadow of allegiance to his dreaded northern neighbour, there is not the least doubt; and we are even ready to give him credit for the most honest intentions to drive him altogether to the colder side of the Alps, if he could muster sufficient courage to come to the scratch. But, whether as plain King of Sardinia, or as a liberator of Lombardy, or as a lord of the whole of Italy, he will never give up one tittle of his absolute sway. He will put up with no dictation or remonstrance on the part of his subjects: nay, not even with the humblest request. With this understanding, he has no objection to declare himself the champion of the Pope, the right arm of the independent national league. But to rid himself of Metternich, only to fall into the hands of a D'Azeglio or Ciceruacchio—only to be pestered with suggestions and solicitations, in the shape of shouts and plaudits, deputations and demonstrations, as the good-natured Pope and the soft-hearted grand-duke have been for the last twelve months—this, depend upon it, enters not into the plans of Charles Albert's liberalism. He will sail in the same boat with the patriots, so long as he alone is master and steersman. But he would sooner dash her against the rocks, or sink her, than suffer any man of them to lay hand upon the wheel, or even throw up a feather to ascertain which way the wind blows.

Moral force will be dragging him along in spite of him.

self, nevertheless; and many of the measures which would seem the result of spontaneous inspiration are in him only the result of that opinion he still flatters himself to hold in chains at the foot of his throne. There is a spirit abroad in Italy which has long been at work, and which has become omnipotent since Pius IX. first made himself, or was supposed to have made himself, its interpreter. Through the organ of the Marchese d'Azeglio, the Italians pledge themselves to the relinquishment of all violent opposition. They pledge themselves to unwearied moderation and forbearance*. They will wait and believe. But their very faith and endurance entitle them to just and reasonable anticipations. They have hitherto been fed with vague promises. On a first exhibition of leniency they have grounded the most extravagant hopes; they have set no limit to their desires. True to their proverb, they have "taken an arm when only a finger was held out to them." May their well-meaning rulers be aware that the only remedy against licentiousness is to be found in the establishment of legal liberty. Let their concessions be as cautious and gradual as may be deemed consistent with public safety; but let the rights of their subjects be well defined and positive. The Italians, we were told till yesterday, are not ripe for unconditional liberty. Granted! though it is no less true that despotism would never mature them. Let the law gain strength in proportion as tyrannical rule abates from its intensity. It is not mildness, or even wisdom, on the part of the prince, that will have power to dignify and redeem a degraded race. Their regeneration must begin with themselves, it must arise from the consciousness of their own responsibility as rational beings; and this, again, from the free exercise of their most undeniable, most inalienable rights in that capacity.

* See his pamphlet, entitled "The Present Movement in Italy," a translation of which was published by Fortunato Prandi, London, 1847.

Public opinion in Italy has only reached its first stage of development. It is not easy to foresee how far it can be suffered to proceed without utter subversion of the powers now in being. The pope has hitherto taken the lead in all popular measures. Now, can real freedom of opinion be rationally expected of a pope? Can the spiritual head of the Catholic church, and as such, the dictator of dogmas and discipline, the editor of the "*Index Librorum Prohibitorum*," general of the Inquisition, and extirpator of heresy, seriously contemplate the ultimate suppression of censorship? Is not the infallibility of his sacred ministry incompatible with the mission of a benevolent legislator? Can any thorough reform be looked for from him, unless it begin by the abdication of one of the two powers so monstrously combined in his person?

The stanchest idolaters of Pope Pius IX., the English, have paused in their headlong admiration for him, on their first perusal of the Bull by which he discountenanced the "Godless Colleges" in Ireland. That Bull, however, was too much in keeping with the position he occupies—whatever may be thought of his personal character. As a ruler, Pius IX. is, if not a liberal, at least quite a benevolent pope. As a priest, we are much mistaken if he be not found in the end a very zealous and eager, if not a bigoted one.

We have all read of Pius IX.'s interview with Renzi, the chief of the latest insurrection at Rimini. The liberated rebel, questioned by the well-meaning pope as to the measures most likely to captivate the affections, and meet with the wants of his people, bluntly mentioned the secularisation of all offices belonging to purely temporal government. His holiness, we are told, observed, that so long as his subjects were well governed, the cloth of the governor mattered but little. There, if we may depend on the authenticity of the anecdote, spoke the priest. If, we beg leave to reply, the ruler is to be merely a shepherd and the

subjects a flock, a theocratic sway is certainly the best; but if the people are gradually to be led to have a mind and will of their own; if, as immortal and responsible beings, they are to search into the soundness of their creed, and into the nature of their rights and duties, Heaven defend them from a master who lays claims to infallibility, and who backs his laws with the menace of the thunders of Heaven!

In one word, so long as Pius is a pope, and so long as the Catholic church continues in its present condition, we doubt if the Roman states, at least, will ever be allowed the full enjoyment of freedom of inquiry: and yet, so long as public opinion is not allowed a free vent, they must continue a prey to flagrant misrule, to raving anarchy. At Rome, no less than at Florence, one of the express conditions of the new law of censorship is, that no attack be directed against the established religion, or even against the church and clergy. The Italians luckily have, for the present, some matters of greater urgency to engross their attention. They may even deem the adjournment of such discussions part of their wary and temporising policy. Still the time for a review of their ecclesiastical system must be come to in the end. The phenomenon of a liberal pope has paralysed for a moment the elements of evil perpetually at work in a theocratic community: but disenchantment is sure to follow; and how the people of Romagna will brook the delusion many of the present generation will live to decide. Nothing has, as yet, been done, nothing contemplated towards a rational ecclesiastical reform: nothing, we will venture to assert, can be attempted without violent commotions. Can the pope, to say nothing of himself and his cardinals, do away with his four archbishops and ninety-eight bishops*? Will he re-

* The number of prelates, and clergy of all ranks, not only in the Roman, but in all Italian states, is alarming to an extent that foreign readers will scarcely believe. The kingdom of Naples, alone, boasts of

duce the prodigious number of his priests, who muster as strong as one twenty-eighth of the population? Will he uncowl his monks, two thousand and twenty-three of whom swarm about the streets of Rome alone? Will he abolish the celibacy of the clergy, the source of the utmost demoralisation throughout the Catholic world?

Yet it is more than fifty years since Alfieri proclaimed that without such measures Italy could not be; nor was much of all this left undone by Napoleon at his downfal. The strong hand of a conquering despot might, by amputation, heal the infected limbs of society of such noxious diseases: a loose mob, in the first intoxication of its awakened energies, might equally effect the cure;—but can the *generalissimo* of priesthood and monkhood ever prove so false to his order?

Neither did any sensible person look forward for such phenomena on his part, nor did one word issue from the pope's lips that might encourage the idlest rumours on that score. On the contrary, he showed, every where, the most earnest, uncompromising zeal for the integrity of the ecclesiastical system, as at present established. Even in his speech delivered at the opening of the new council of state, on the 16th of November last, Pius IX. was anxious to warn his subjects against chimerical anticipations. "He will deceive himself greatly," he said, "who shall see in

twenty archbishops and sixty-five bishops. The number of ecclesiastics amounts to no less than 98,000, amongst whom are 25,000 monks and 26,000 nuns. Sicily has its three archbishops and eleven bishops; and even the island of Sardinia, with a population of scarcely half a million, maintains three archbishops, eight bishops, with no less than 117 convents! In the Austrian states alone the numbers of the clergy had been reduced. The Lombardo-Venetian kingdom had in 1832, only two archbishops, eighteen bishops, and fifty-three convents. The regular clergy amounted to about 17,000; the monastic clergy to 1360—all this, thanks to the reforms of Joseph II. The Austrians seem now, however, aware of their error, and every measure tends to the increment of monks and Jesuits.

this *Consulta di Stato*, which I have just created, a realisation of his own Utopian notions, *of the germ of an institution incompatible with the Pontifical Sovereignty.*"

It is even so. Church and state are too intrinsically identified at Rome. The pope cannot be too much of a liberal, without being too little of a priest. He has not, as yet, had even the moral courage and devotion of a Gangenelli; but has been, all the while, hesitating, whether or not he should once more rid the world of those shallow humbugs—the Jesuits, notwithstanding the streams of civil bloodshed with which they threatened to stain one of the happiest European communities, notwithstanding the certainty with which such an act could rely on the applause of all Christendom, no less than the blessings of his subjects.

Railways, or, at least, a talk about them, have been, even in Austrian Lombardy, ever since their first construction in England. It was a deplorable hobby of that infatuated old Gregory, that led him to excommunicate those iron arteries of nations. No rational being could hold out against the spirit of the times; nor could Gregory's successor any longer prevent the professors of Bologna from joining their Italian brethren at the Scientific Congress at Genoa. We confess, indeed, having been rather startled by the news that the application by the Prince of Canino, to name Bologna as the *rendezvous* of one of the yearly meetings of the association, was met by a flat refusal on the part of Pius. Nor do we accept the alleged financial difficulties and contemplated retrenchment as a sound reason for such a denial; for the municipal council of Bologna, on whom the expense would fall, could better judge whether they could afford it, and whether the advantages accruing to their town from the affluence of strangers, usual on such occurrences, would not amply counterbalance their losses.

Yet neither to antipathy to science are we willing to ascribe that apparent harshness in one so mild and enlightened. The real reason is, perhaps, to be sought in

the superstitious panic into which modern geological and astronomic discoveries have lately thrown the literal and scrupulous interpreters of Holy Writ. They were not all popes nor Catholics that raised a cry of anathema against the "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation." Well disposed as he may be, Pius dreads, or must affect to dread, unlimited freedom of inquiry.

With the same honest views, the new pope has called around him the soundest part of his legal advisers, to throw some light and order into that dismal chaos of pontifical laws, and to bring about some scheme of reform into that most absurd and corrupt of all administrations. The Grand Duke of Tuscany was raised to the stars not many years ago for a similar enterprise; and we shall not soon forget the outcry of enthusiasm with which the first opening of a court was hailed at Florence. Civil and criminal trials were, however, public at Naples, at Parma, and wherever the Napoleon code was, with some restrictions, preserved; and a system of legislation, analogous to the French, prevailed in those states since 1814. In so far, then, Pius's innovation can give no offence; but, as Alfieri has it, where is the use of laws* unless their inviolability is warranted by a constitutional compact? The Neapolitan has a free access to court when a burglar or pickpocket is brought before the magistrate, when the publicity of the trial can have no other effect than to initiate an honest citizen into the worst secrets of the human heart and the slang of the Vicaria†; but when an aristocratic, or otherwise powerful, criminal is taken before his judges, there is no lack of pretexts for the exclusion of the multitude; and in all political cases, where public observation might exercise a salutary check on the ministers of the law, a *corte-stataria, tribunale straordinario*, or court-martial, is drawn

* "The leggi son, ma chi pon mano ad esse."

† The central prison at Naples.

up; and its strokes fall suddenly, invisibly, as the decrees of Heaven.

Where would be in England the benefit of public trials, without the presence of a jury, without a seasonable shifting of the judge on his circuits, above all, without the newspaper reports, and the ever watchful, discriminate comments upon "Justice's Justice?" Such is, however, the state of things in these above-mentioned Italian states, in which the courts have been, in common cases, thrown open to the people: if we add to this, that seven judges invariably sit, where only one is deemed sufficient in this country, and that the consequent number of magistrates necessarily deprives the poor small state of the means of making them independent by a competent salary.

Many a political institution works well in a free country, which is utterly nugatory where public morals have not, by a liberal training, been attuned to it. We repeat it, and it is not without anguish of soul, the Italians have, by long thraldom, been sunk to the last stage of degradation; nor can they be restored to the dignity of human beings, without those two great engines of regeneration, freedom of opinion and activity of social life. The breathing-time afforded even by such ephemeral events as the constitutional insurrections of 1821, and the short jubilee of 1831, and the still shorter respite consequent upon the elevation of a popular ruler, as in the case of Pius IX., are sufficient to change the face of society; but a rude reaction hitherto invariably ensued: and the Italian falls back, if not into vice, at least into sluggish despondency.

Public opinion is likely to make its way more unresisted in Tuscany. A certain latitude was observable in that fortunate state, even under the ascendancy of Austrian Protectorate. The thunders of the Censor, at Florence, invariably alighted one day too late; seizures always took place one day after the publication and diffusion of obnoxious works; the Austrian ambassador there never

found smart and willing agents; the imperial mandates were ever somewhat reluctantly and blunderingly complied with. The paternal ruler did always his best to palliate, or connive at, his children's trangressions.

But now the Tuscan Archduke has declared himself an Italian prince. He is understood to have shaken off all allegiance to his imperial cousin. His subjects have now to deal with him alone; and all they ask of him is unlimited permission to tell him their mind without reserve. This permission, moreover, was rather wrenched from his royal hands than freely bestowed. The right of petition was taken by storm; and the alarming number of clandestine publications brought about that necessary reform in the law of censorship with which the Tuscans are already so far from satisfied.

The press is, consequently, more out-spoken at Florence than it can ever be either in Rome or Turin. It little signifies, however, where, or by what means, opinion makes its way into Italian soil. It has achieved prodigies already under the whelming shackles with which tyranny environed it. If once established on a sound legal basis, if ever fully reassured from external influence, in at least one of the main divisions of the country, its triumph will equally be asserted from the Alps to the sea. Only the Tuscans, as well as the Romans, are not yet quite easy on the part of their northern bugbear. Austria is still at their door. Till the inviolability of their frontier is established beyond all doubt, they dread a relapse into those evils of which they almost despaired ever to witness the close.

If ever free from these fatal misgivings, the Italians, we are confident, will set no limits to their daring inquisitiveness. Sudden emancipation will lead to raving extravagance; as in the days of the reformation of the sixteenth century, they will rush into the wildest, no matter how dangerous, extremes.

Be it so; we must be willing to take the worst conse-

quences of freedom of thought; no boundary should be set even to its exaggeration and waywardness. Reason is sure to gain the upper hand in the end; the most alarming theories are eventually brought to the level of the common standard of human belief; the most unconditional latitude of discussion is sure to lead to the greatest glorification of God's truth. *Magna est veritas!* Out upon the truth that will not stand the broad glare of day-light!

CHAPTER XII.

PIUS IX.

Italian Princes—At war with Public Opinion—Losing Ground by rapid Degrees—Pius IX.—Consequences of his Amnesty—Of the Occupation of Ferrara by the Austrians—New Policy of the Italian Princes—Conclusion.

CONSUMMATUM est! The Italians have achieved a great victory. They have conquered their princes. It is a victory, in sooth, neither very difficult nor unprecedented. Naples and Turin equally dictated the law to their sovereigns in 1820. Princes were equally at a discount in central Italy in 1831. Twice and thrice did the day of freedom dawn upon Italy. Revolutions in that country were sudden, unanimous, bloodless; but as invariably, also, short-lived and unavailing. In every instance Austria stepped forward to the rescue. The fugitive princes came back at the head of thousands of Austrian bayonets. Italy, it was very evident, had only one ruler, only one enemy. Little did it avail to turn against those sceptered lieutenants of an ever-present, though invisible, power. Their native princes were only the lash that smote them. Their wrath should be turned against the hand that wielded it. With all the diadems glittering on their brow, the Italian kings and dukes were only the first slaves in the land: fellow-subjects, fellow-sufferers—perhaps unwilling slaves, chafing and fretting in the secret of their heart, longing for freedom. They must, they may, be won over

to the common cause. Perhaps they wish for nothing better than a little urging on the part of their subjects. They wish it to appear as if concessions were wrung from their hands. They fear to commit themselves by too ready a compliance with popular views.

For the last fifteen years the Italians have acted in pursuance of this one principle. They have taken pity on their princes, encouraged, redeemed them. They were a worthless material, most of them, to work upon. A mixture of weakness and stubbornness, of arrogance and impotence, of jealousy and mistrust. Yet the Italians did not despair. They crowded around them; they perplexed and mystified them; they removed their timid and bigoted advisers; they praised and shamed, coaxed and bullied them. They separated them by degrees from their common oppressor. They made them aware of the necessity of identifying their interests with those of their subjects.

It was by this slow system of gentle, half-passive resistance, that the King of Sardinia and the Grand Duke of Tuscany were gradually *nationalised*. The former, by constant appeals to his ambition, to his captious jealousy of power; the latter, by clouds of incense ministered to his vanity, as a philosophical innovator, a champion of humanity, a worthy successor of Joseph and Leopold. Public opinion at Turin and Florence advanced with gigantic strides. The enlightening of the people kept pace with the increase of public prosperity. People breathed freely already, and felt in their hearts that brighter days were in store.

Still the seat of war was in the heart of the country. The obstinacy of the infatuated Gregory XVI. led to a more energetic opposition in the states of the church. Thought was there also at work, but with a dangerous degree of exasperation and impatience. That wrong-headed pope did all in his power to drive his subjects to sanguinary extremities.

All Europe was big with ominous apprehension about Italy: on the look-out for an imminent catastrophe. The death of the old pope was even assigned as the great climacteric.

At last it pleased Providence to remove the wrathful old priest. It pleased Providence to give him a successor who understood the spirit of the age. The revolution was achieved—we should rather say was ushered in—under favourable auspices. He who was to be its first victim became its promoter. A new era began for Italy. The system of her moderate patriots had now reached its maturity. The new pope made himself its interpreter, and had all the merit of bringing it into being.

The princes of Italy, with Sardinia and Tuscany at their head, had hitherto only suffered themselves to be dragged along by public opinion. They bowed, and with no good grace, to imperious necessity. They strained all their puny strength; they held the reins as tight as they were able, even though aware that they were being run away with.

The pope slackened them, and even shook them merrily about the horses' manes. The impulse his mere decree of amnesty gave the whole of Italy proves the degree of coercion the country had previously undergone.

There was not any thing new in the act itself which signalised Pius's accession to the throne. Nothing more common in Italy than *universal* political amnesties. The coronation of a new reigning prince, the birth or majority of an heir apparent and the like auspicious events, have constantly been, and are invariably announced to the world, together with similar evidences of royal magnanimity. The Italians were used to it. Every new ruler in that distracted country seemed aware of the wisdom of clearing the prisons of the late monarch's victims to make room for his own. Those Augean stables, the Roman fortresses of state, never were in greater need of a thorough Herculean

cleansing. The indiscriminate severity of Gregory sowed a rich harvest for Pius's mildness. The invariable practice adopted by every infallible pope, of undoing the acts of his no less infallible predecessor, could never be followed under circumstances more favourable to the interests of humanity. Six thousand state prisoners, in a state of two millions, were a formidable item for a bankrupt pontifical budget; and, had the game been carried on further, the testy old Gregory himself must have been reduced to the alternative, either of starving his captives or disposing of them by a summary process analogous to the clearing of the hospitals by Napoleon at Jaffa, or else throwing open the door and condemning them to go and toil for their bread.

This *Indulgenza Plenaria* was, however, soon followed by the recall of exiles from abroad, which could certainly not be conceived in obedience to mere economical views. No doubts were for one moment entertained as to the sincerity and purity of Pius's intentions.

In one essential point, besides, Pius IX.'s amnesty differed from all previous acts of a similar character. He declared himself the friend of the pardoned transgressors. Instead of contrite and brow-beaten penitents, timidly sneaking home in the dark, swearing away their souls by abject recantations and humiliations, and harassed by an unremitting surveillance of the police, the unreclaimed rebels came back with rolling of drums and flourish of trumpets, with ovations, plaudits, grand dinners, and hip! hip! hurrah! they rushed into the Vatican, gave the pope the benefit of their advice, sat by him in council, took reins and whip in their own hands, and cried, "Here we are!" as if the good-natured Pius were neither more nor less than one of their crew—the pantaloon in their new pantomime!

Under such auspices, little need we wonder if the pontifical subjects hailed the accession of the mild Ferretti as

the dawning of a new era. It would be idle to number the families to whom so wide-spreading a pardon was directly or indirectly the source of domestic joy. The pope, they argued, was in their own hands. He was, as the phrase is in that country, *compromesso*, that is, he stood committed in the eyes of Europe; they must stun him, hurry him on with their acclamation, allow him never a moment's rest or reflection—take him by storm.

The Italians are a subtle, far-sighted race; long trained to the most consummate arts of adulation: they did him in bronze, in marble, they did him in writing. Their gratitude for his clemency could stop at nothing short of actual apotheosis. The good pope awoke in the morning and found himself a hero. As such, he was made to understand, much was expected of, much—that was the climax of wonder—had been *promised* by him.

So much being taken for granted, credit being given him to such an alarming amount, something, it was clear, must be done, and breathless, flushed, flurried, the pope considered how far he could meet the demands of the times.

The pope may, perhaps, have been astonished at his own work; he followed it up earnestly, honestly, nevertheless—he proceeded hand-in-hand with his subjects; his concessions were always in keeping with the moderate party of patriots he had summoned round his throne from every part of the country. After his example, such of the Italian princes as admitted common sense in their council had also come to the best understanding with their people.

It was a crisis of the greatest moment; every thing was proceeding with admirable order and measure. Austria must needs thrust her head into a hornet's nest; she tried plots and intrigues at Rome—they turned out miserable failures; she then resorted to violence—seized on the defenceless town of Ferrara.

Those Austrian garrisons, on the right bank of the Po, are one of the many blunders of the Holy Alliance of 1814. They were stationed at Piacenza, Ferrara, and Comacchio, ostensibly for the protection of the states those cities belonged to. So long as the best understanding prevailed between Austria on the one hand, and Rome and Parma on the other, no mischief could be apprehended from that unnatural juxtaposition. The troops were confined to their citadels. They never dreamt of interfering with the political or municipal administration of the town. They came down to hear high mass, or to swell the pageantry of the Fête Dieu. The less hostile part of the community went, of a summer evening, to hear the airs of their martial bands. To the most rigid patriots those sounds were grating, unendurable. From old habits of caution, or from actual fear of Italian poisons and sorceries, they brought their own brown bread from home, and cooked their tallow-seasoned soups in their barracks. For the rest, they behaved with order and decency, and the officers paid for their lodgings whenever billeted on the town.

The first serious collision between the parties took place in 1831. All central Italy, then in open insurrection, having taken up the three national colours, the citizens of Piacenza and Ferrara were not slow in following the example of their brethren. The Commander of Ferrara, at the time, winked at the enormity. He shut himself up in his fortress, called for his pipe, and looked out at the window, like a true Austrian, waiting for orders. He of Piacenza was a more fastidious customer. One of the three hated colours was red; and he, in common with buffaloes and turkey-cocks, having an invincible antipathy to that sanguine hue, was dazzled, angered by it. He gave orders for the removal of the obnoxious cockade. Down with it!—down with the hat and head too, if it clings too fast to it! In less than four-and-twenty hours the proudest crest in Piacenza was shorn of the darling

gew-gaw. Next, he took possession of the town, in the name of Maria Louisa, its legitimate owner; he offered that exalted person refuge and protection against her rebellious subjects of Parma; and when these latter ventured to set foot on the Placentine territory, he stepped out with horse and cannon, caught them asleep at Fiorenzola, killed and captured as many as he could lay hands on, and led a long string of them with tight ropes round their necks, till their eyes started from their sockets, and with great crowing and blustering laid them at the feet of their incensed mistress.

Whilst this was taking place at Piacenza, the tri-colour standard was for a whole month waving under the very nose of the Austrian sentinels at Ferrara. So far each of the commanders had followed the dictates of his own discretion. Presently, however, pressing orders came from Vienna: a whole host marched forward, and Ferrara, together with Bologna, and the whole Legations were stripped of their "rainbow of liberty," as utterly, as effectually, and, it is melancholy to say, as easily as the Placentines had been from the outset.

But, in 1831, the Austrians acted in the name, and as auxiliaries of the government of Parma, Modena, and Rome. Their invasion was solicited by their allies, and took place in compliance with the treaties of 1814. The Duchess of Parma thanked—the pope blessed them. They were backed by France—applauded by every friend of peace and order in Europe.

But lo! a new pope sits on the Vatican; a benevolent pope, as Madame Tussaud has it. Greater harmony between the monarch and his people never existed; nor did an innovator on the throne ever meet with more unqualified, universal applause. All the efforts of Austria—all her intrigues have failed to create one moment's alarm or disturbance. Old and new patriots, monks and Jacobines, Carbonari and Young Italy, men of all creeds and parties,

proceed hand-in-hand. Greater mutual faith and reliance, compactness and unanimity, moderation and wisdom, the world never witnessed. Credit is given to the government to an incredible amount. No shade of doubt as to the honesty of its intentions. Any timid or backward step on its part is looked upon as matter of stubborn necessity. A prince and state acting on such principles ought, in the nineteenth century, to be invulnerable. Any stroke aimed against their peace ought to recoil against him who dealt it. Nor can we yet be persuaded that the Austrians meditated a serious and deliberate attack; the step was taken, nevertheless, and the cabinet of Vienna, however they might repent, were too obstinate to retrace it.

They dare not move one step farther, nevertheless; beyond the moat of the beleaguered town they have, for ever, lost their influence. The matter of those garrisons must be settled by diplomatic negotiation. The Roman States are no less safe from Austrian interference. The independence of one Italian prince has become an indisputed fact. What the ill-fated *Constitutionalists* of 1820 and 1831 in vain attempted and so bitterly atoned for in Naples, Turin, and Bologna, is now achieved at Rome without one drop of bloodshed. There is nothing, henceforth, that the pope and his patriots may not safely undertake; they are inviolable, so long as they steer clear of civil feuds and armed collision.

The effect of this firm and manly conduct of one Italian government on the rest of the country has partly been seen, and is almost incalculable. It is little to say that the independence of the Roman pontiff secured the emancipation of all the other states; it actually compelled the other states to follow the same line of policy. *Bongré, malgré*, they must be independent. With the exception of the ill-fated Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, Austria loses, at one stroke, her footing in Italy. Such of the Italian princes as would still side by her can hardly any longer

rely on her support. They are in the hands of their subjects. Compliance with their just demands will soon be found to be their best—their only safeguard.

The Duke of Lucca has lately experienced the correctness of our assertion. He stamped and threatened, talked very big about the sacred rights of the throne, the efficacy of imperial patronage. He mustered up his troops, lighted the match of his cannon, established a little kingdom of terror. What of it? Five unarmed youths stood up against his legions and batteries, undaunted, unflinching, though deserted by the craven multitude. It was a novel sight. The Italians—five of them—have learned to face fire and sword. Those five heroic young men carried the day. The Duke of Lucca seemed to have sense enough to perceive that their example would be contagious. One steady heart is sufficient to reassure a whole host. There were among his subjects—though no more than five at first—that were not to be put down by fear. Hence he declared in his manifesto, that he was determined "to reign not by fear but by love."

The declaration of that hare-brained libertine must become a watchword for all the Italian princes. The Duke of Lucca himself preferred a dastardly and ignominious desertion of his post to a compromise with the necessity of his situation; and so far every one of his sceptered colleagues is at liberty to follow his example. Such of them as rely on the strength of their armies, as the King of Naples; or on the support of Austria, as the Duke of Modena; are not unlikely to meet with the fate of Carlo Lodovico. The very enslavement of Italy has trained her to a uniform system of policy. Either must Austria prove omnipotent, or public opinion must end by driving that power and its abettors beyond the Alps.

In the meanwhile, since the ill-omened invasion of Ferrara, a large portion of Italy is governed by patriots. The Tuscan archduke follows in the footsteps of the

Roman pontiff. The Duke of Lucca adopts the policy of the Grand-Duke of Tuscany; he does even better, resigns his state into abler hands. The King of Sardinia declares himself answerable for the independent rights of the pope as an Italian prince. A good understanding is thus established between four of the most influential Italian states. This is the germ of a national federation which has virtually existed for many years in the hearts of the people, and which will be duly organised between the governments ere we are many months older. In the meanwhile the Custom-House Union, now in progress of negotiation at Turin, is an important step towards it.

A federation between the princes naturally compels them to a uniform line of interior administration. There are wants equally felt by all the people of Italy, which must equally be listened to and provided for by all such rulers as wish to find their rest on their thrones. They stand now alone, reft of that Austrian support that implied ignominious vassalage. Their newly acquired dignity as independent princes places them at the mercy of their subjects. All European monarchs are so. Their power, henceforth, exclusively emanates from popular favour. They are the idol the people have set up, and can with equal facility overthrow. The example of the most liberal of them becomes a law for all the others. "VIVA PIO NONO" was the spell-word at Florence and Lucca. In the pope's name the Italians have conquered. The most benevolent sovereign has taken the lead hitherto. So long as he favours and promotes patriotic measures, the pope, be it understood, rules at Turin or Florence, no less than at Bologna or Rimini. The pope is now a symbol. His name a talisman. It is synonymous with Italy and freedom!

So much can calmness and unanimity achieve for a nation, especially when strengthened by the consciousness of the justice of its cause. The war-cry of liberty is commu-

nicated from state to state with the rapidity of the electric telegraph. A victory at Rome or at Lucca is a theme of rejoicing from the Alps to the sea. Freedom of the press at the Capitol leads to equal latitude on the banks of the Arno. The *Piedmontese Gazette* derives fresh boldness from the tone of the *Alba* or *Contemporaneo*. No nation bound together by long-established political compact, by long-cherished traditions and common interests, could proceed with greater unanimity than such as was evinced by the hitherto discordant Italians. The patriots are uniform, methodical in their transactions, *unisonous* in their demands. We hear of no discussion of local interests, or provincial, or municipal franchises. Two only are, for the present, the objects to be carried—freedom of the press and *civic* or *national* guard. Emancipation of public opinion, with the means of vindicating and warranting it. The arming of the people has ever been looked upon by the Italians as the main, the only instrument, of their deliverance. No charter, no representative assembly, no educational scheme, satisfies them half so much as the consciousness of power resulting from holding the muskets in their hands. It is but too natural a feeling with them. Till now they have been crushed by force—might has been right for them. The Austrians, or else the Swiss, have always been the main instrument of the power of their despots. They were artfully disarmed, kept aloof from all warlike exercise, and then upbraided with faint-heartedness and effeminacy. The Austrians lengthened the period of the military service of their Italian subjects, so as to train as few of them as possible to arms. Ferdinand IV., of Naples, himself, by his own confession, the greatest of cowards, contended that his *maccaroni-eaters* should wear a cuirass to their backs, that being the only part of their body they ever turned to the enemy. Their own rulers, no less than foreigners, made themselves merry at the expense of Italian poltroonery. The Italians long to wash out their

shame in the best of their own blood. They have a vague longing for a fair trial of their courage. The wars of Napoleon ought, indeed, to be sufficient to screen them from all imputation of cowardice; but since even such recent events are forgotten, since their assertions are every where received with a sneer, they must put themselves in a position to make good their words with fresh deeds. They must fight that men may learn to respect them. They owe a few drops of blood to their national honour. Let them, therefore, for one moment revel in the enjoyment of their own strength. Let them—to make use of their own popular proverb—"hold the sword by the handle."

Indeed they have too many reasons to attach so much importance to their national armament. Their victory only commences. Austria is baffled, but yet unbroken. She halts, but does not retire. She disavows hostile intentions, but evinces no friendly inclinations. She stops short in her career of unjustifiable aggression, humbled, bewildered, but not resigned. With her hand on the hilt of her sword she watches every step of Italian advancement. There is something appalling in the silence of her irresolution. But for the profound peace of Europe, but for the outcry of honest England, and the wavering of treacherous France, she would fain strike a blow. But for her uneasiness on the part of the rival states of Germany, on the part of the Swiss radicals, on the part of her own subjects in Hungary and Gallicia, she would gladly have a dash at the pope. Meanwhile, she waits and watches, she plots with discontented prelates, with Jesuits, with the very refuse of the populace. One instant of opportunity, of good resolve on her part, one deed of imprudence on the part of the Italians themselves, and she may yet sweep unresisted over Italy.

Against the contingencies of any such sudden onset, it is the duty of every good patriot to provide. Nay, it is well for them to consider a struggle with Austria as unavoidable.

All they want is time, and time is given them. The strife is most happily put off, till they may become a match for their redoubted adversary. Let them only not waste one precious moment in vain dissensions or jealousies. Let them give up all political or constitutional discussions for the present. To arm! to arm! is for them the great object; the common necessity.

We repeat it—the contest may be put off—not averted. Were even Austria to persevere in her peaceful position—which is next to impossible, since her position becomes every day more precarious at home—it will be their sacred obligation at some future period to attack her. Their most fertile, most flourishing provinces are in her hands. The triumph of Florence and Rome aggravates the humiliation of Milan. Till an insolent German soldiery tramples on their brethren of Lombardy, it is idle for the Italians to dream of national honour or freedom. The enemy is in the heart of the country. Till he be driven beyond the Alps no Italian has a right to look up into the face of European nations. The brand of abject vassalage is on his brow. It avails him little that his petty town or territory are rid of the hated presence, that his petty government follows an independent line of policy. He is an Italian or is nothing. So long as he suffers the least corner of his country to be the prey of a foreign invader, he must renounce the glories of his Italian name. He may be a Tuscan, a Piedmontese—but how tame do these words sound by the side of the noble associations of Italy and Rome? Let him claim the whole of his great fatherland! God himself has traced its boundaries: the mountains and the sea: God himself has vouchsafed its people one language, one religion—all the most sacred bonds of national unity. All the advantages hitherto obtained are merely provisional, transitional. Italian confederacy must lead to Italian nationality. All partial or local revolutions are only preliminary movements. The work of Italian regene-

ration may begin at Turin or Rome: it must, nevertheless, end at Milan. Such is the political creed of every patriot throughout the country: of the most moderate no less than of the most impatient and fiery. They may differ as to the means, but their object is very clearly one and the same.

The arming of the people is, from the above reasons, the uppermost wish of every heart; even freedom of opinion seems to be of less consequence with them, for their cause is too fair, too plain and obvious, to be in need of any very strenuous advocacy. They have obtained enough from their rulers, if these will only allow them to prepare for imminent struggle. The Italians are not blind to their real wants. The papal subjects are mustering and drilling in hot haste. The Grand-Duke of Tuscany has been coaxed or urged into a more liberal decree for the calling together of a *bonâ fide* national guard. The *Italian part of Italy* will presently be converted into a vast camp. The moderate patriots do not palliate the extremity of the age. War with Austria, however remote, is, even with them, an inevitable contingency.

Mortal enmity, till every one gets his own, is the mutual compact between Austria and Italy. No compromise with the Northern Usurper, even from the most discreet and temporising Italian. Every effort at local amelioration must lead to this great national purpose. It may be the work of long years, of untiring perseverance; so it must end, nevertheless. The fulfilment of such expectations is, with an Italian, a part of his belief in Providence. But if the Italians must not mistake the present armistice for a permanent peace—if they must act under constant conviction of the inevitableness of armed hostilities—it is no less of the greatest importance to themselves to put off such extremities to the best of their power. No pretext should be afforded to the enemy for immediate interference. So long as they go steadily, unanimously to work, no man

dares to touch them. The sympathy and applause of all Europe is sufficient to bear them on unscathed. Order and concord render them invulnerable.

Their sovereigns, be it remembered, are only half converted; if pressed too hard—if scared out of their present benignity—they would not hesitate to call in the Austrians to their aid. To rely on the sincerity of the King of Sardinia, who has twice ratted in the course of his life, or of the Grand-Duke of Tuscany, who has been made a liberal in spite of himself, would be altogether too idle. Enough has been obtained from such sovereigns—enough wrung from their hands; they must be allowed to breathe, to recover from the panic of their recent discomfiture. Italian princes have, but too often, shown their aptitude to recantation and perjury. The Duke of Lucca is not the first instance of such cowardly defection; and the support Austria appears to have denied him, in her present embarrassment, might be gladly tendered to a less insignificant prince, and under more auspicious circumstances.

Every chance of successful resistance on the part of Italy, in the case of immediate invasion, depends on the sincerity and consistency of her *nationalised* princes, especially of the King of Sardinia; he alone has an efficient army—compact, well disciplined—which he holds in his hand and wields at his pleasure like his own good sword. So long as he remains true to Italy, Austria can either not advance or only rushes to her doom.

The policy of the King of Sardinia has hitherto shown wisdom and maturity; he has been yielding to the liberal movement, but by degrees, and only to unarmed, peaceful opposition; he has well played his cards, and kept up a fair game with public opinion; progress has been practicable in his states; his measures have proceeded hand-in-hand with the wants and hopes of his subjects; he has, however, every where shown the most distrustful jealousy of his

absolute authority; much will he do for his people, but he must do it himself and alone.

But will he jeopardise his crown for the pope's sake, or throw the gauntlet to Austria in the name of mere justice? It is not only fair-dealing and sincerity that is required of him; he must act with promptness and determination—he must check Austria at the very first step, even if, by so doing, he were to draw all the weight of her displeasure on his own head; irresoluteness or temporisation on his part would be the ruin of his allies and his own.

And yet is he the man for bold, decisive measures? To those of the Italian patriots who do not actually mistrust him, his conduct is a riddle throughout; some of them are still willing to look upon him as a prince evidently cast after the model of his noblest progenitors of Savoy; faithful to that native instinct which, from his earliest years, prompted him to great things. They refer, with pride, to his sober and soldier-like habits—to that activity and energy that never allows him to sit more than ten minutes at his meals, and urges him daily to ride one of his chargers to death; they recall, with complacency, the laurels he reaped in 1823, at Trocadero, at the head of a column of French grenadiers, against the Spanish Constitutionalists, and in opposition, also, to those Piedmontese exiles he had so lately denied and forsaken; in their fond conceit, the diadem of Italy gleams still temptingly before his eyes, and he is only biding his time. On the other hand, his heart and soul has long been with the priests. Those who have seen him at the head of his ten thousand grey, brown and black-hooded friars, during the solemnities of the *Corpus Domini*, or who have witnessed the holy wrath that was kindled in his manly heart when his people refused to volunteer their oil for the general illumination ordered by him in honour of the handkerchief of Santa Veronica, do not hesitate to express their opinion that the title of Sceptered Loyola, or King of the Jesuits, is even

dearer and better suited to him than that of Liberator of Italy.

He is, no less, at the head of the only Italian troops that are really worth their salt—he is close upon Austria, into the heart of whose Italian territories he can march any morning, before the first cry of alarm is raised. The ambition of uniting all Italy, or, at least, that fine region diademed by the chain of the Alps, under one sceptre, not the meanest of mortals can be insensible to. Charles Albert has shown himself a base and heartless tyrant—no good can come of mincing words—his defection in 1820, and his butcher-work in 1833, is all the earnest we have of his devotion to his country's cause. Ambition, it is clear, he possesses, but is it of a conservative or *acquisitive* nature? Is extent of empire or unconditional absolutism a greater object with him? Few in Italy would trust, if success could be secured without him; but his army cannot be taken from him without such a struggle and shedding of blood as would lay the conqueror helplessly at the mercy of the foreign invader. The past must be given to oblivion. Credit must be given him for honesty of intentions. Those who would avail themselves of those fine Piedmontese regiments must be content to take their king into the bargain.

We are not disposed to lay any greater stress on the truth and straightforwardness of the Grand-Duke of Tuscany. He also, since his accession to the throne, has played a variety of parts, from the *Tiranno* to the *Zani*. Priestly hypocrisy, popular festivities, the lottery, all that could most immediately tend to pamper the grovelling propensities of the lowest classes, invariably found favour with his imperial highness*. Up to the very last twelve

* It is not from any ill will that we allow ourselves some retrospective strictures on the conduct of this "father of his country," who has long been the *beau-ideal* of enlightened despotism. But English travellers

months no despotism could be more enervating and demoralising than the sleepy rule to which the lively Tuscans were submitted. But the characteristic feature of the Grand-Duke's government was weakness, and its subjects

have, indeed, been too absurd; the smiles of a Tuscan police-officer have proved so mighty a spell to dazzle their judgment, that their reminiscences of Tuscany have all the glow of a description of the *Pays de Cocagne*. John Bull is too apt to suffer his gratitude to get the better of his sound judgment. A pope's regard for his guineas is too readily construed into a benevolent leaning towards the cause of social progress. The Duke of Tuscany invites him to a court-ball, the pope makes him welcome to his pontifical toe—and behold! they bribe him, they fool him, blind and deafen him to the grievances of his fellow-beings.

Deprived nearly of all commerce and industry by the most illiberal protective regulations, Tuscany, naturally a barren, mountainous, marshy country, was rapidly sinking from that state of prosperity for which it has been too long extolled. All had been done to isolate the Duchy from the neighbouring states. Tuscany was "an oasis in the wilderness," secured by a permanent quarantine against political contagion. Every thing in Tuscany was eminently Tuscan; and the care with which allusion to the name of Italy was dexterously avoided might induce the people to believe that the Apennines and the Tyrrhenian Sea were the boundaries of the known world. Thus all the banking and insurance houses, of which the centre for all the rest of Italy was at Milan, never could, without the utmost difficulty, extend their flourishing operations at Florence. While Piedmont, Parma, and even Austria, had introduced a uniform decimal system, the Tuscans were, and are still, condemned to reckon by their *florins, lire, paoli*, and *crazie*; the most awkward system of numeration, the most wretched coin in existence. The lines of public conveyance, which, under the names of *messageries, diligences*, or *velocifori*, have crossed Italy in every direction during the last twenty years; and, by the correspondence they had established with French, Swiss, and German lines, had powerfully contributed to afford the easiest and speediest communication throughout the continent previous to the establishment of railways, were constantly stopped at the Tuscan confine; and this because the Grand-Duke, faithful in this to the Austrian policy, which favours the lower classes to the detriment of the higher, apprehended in that public conveyance the utter destruction of his *vetturini* and *calessieri*—one of the numerous classes of his beloved populace, privileged to starve their horses to death, and to harass, waylay, and abuse the travellers that had the ill fortune to fall into their hands with all kinds of ill treat-

could find no obstacle in bending it to their own views as soon as the Roman movement afforded an opportunity.

Presuming on the impotence of their government, in the first intoxication of success, the Tuscans have gone

ment short of cutting their throats. Diligences were, however, at last, established even in Tuscany,—so powerful proved the march of intellect even against the Grand-Duke's parental intentions; but, faithful even in that extremity to his ideas of patriotism, he called them *Diligenze Toscane;* and, by interdicting their intercourse with the Roman and Lombard lines, he completely frustrated the main point for which they were instituted.

The effects of this narrow-minded policy are visible even at the present day; and the *vetturini conspiracy* against a railway omnibus at Empoli, reported with so much horror by the "Daily News" correspondent, is only a result of the base pandering of the government to the retrograde propensities of an ignorant populace, who apprehended in every public improvement an attempt to deprive them of their means of subsistence. But the *vetturini* were only part of a vast system by which Tuscany, like Switzerland, limited all its industry to the manifold art of "fleecing the traveller." The Grand-Duke spared no trouble to render it the favourite resort of foreigners by fitting up the whole country, and especially its lovely capital, as a large hotel. Hence, as we have observed, the comparative ease and civility of the myrmidons of the police-office; hence the aversion to capital punishment, and to those political arrests and proscriptions, which might have the effect of spreading a gloom over the face of society, and inspiring with mistrust or antipathy the thoughtless tourist who travelled in quest of amusement. Hence, also, the numberless religious and popular festivals, flattering a lazy populace in its idle predilections, and impressing the short-sighted observer with notions of a contentment and plenteousness which caused him to exclaim, in the words of the court poet,—

"Deh! che non è tutto Toscana il Mondo!"

Hence the public banquets on Ascension Day, when the *Cascine* were turned into a vast dining table, and the meanest subject became, *at his own expense,* his sovereign's guest; and all those *Pallii, Corse di bighe,* balls, races, fire-works, and illuminations, with which the people were regaled to satiety from April to August, and in which his Imperial Highness's coaches-and-six, in all their glitter of new glazing and gilding, invariably played a prominent part, lest, deprived of his serene countenance, those mummeries and fooleries should lose their zest, and the people should wax tired of their happiness.

even further than not only Austria but even European diplomacy are likely to countenance. Those tricolour standards—those shouts, "Death to the Germans"—were not in the programme of the moderate party. Neither is

Equally anxious for the promotion of enlightened religion, always apprehensive lest the zeal of his good people for their old saints might, in this age of scepticism, relax, he was even at the trouble of introducing a new saint into the Calendar, who, under the protection of his Neapolitan Grand-Duchess, created a temporary but lively sensation in Florence.

Every one has heard of the virtues and miracles of Santa Philomela, whose history was made known to the world through the visions and revelations of a Neapolitan priest, who brought her relics into light from the Roman catacombs, under special grant of the late pontiff, and erected himself into a minister of her altar, and interpreter of her oracle.

In consequence, however, of prevailing incredulity, or perhaps in accordance with the ancient adage, "that no prophet is heeded in his own country," or owing to the opposition of rival miracle-manufactories, the new saint was but coldly welcomed at Naples, and would soon have been lost in the crowd of deities of the Catholic Olympus, had she not found favour in the tender heart of the betrothed princess, who brought the little idol—an unheard of dowry since the days of Rebecca—to her future lord and husband in Tuscany. Every thing was soon made ready for Philomela's apotheosis. Priests and monks were made to preach up the young martyr's wonderful history. The effigy of the little goddess, for which, it is said, a beautiful prostitute sat, was exhibited at the church of the *Santa Annunciata*, and the most notorious haunts of old-fashioned superstition were deserted for her sake. It was soon evident, however, that the charm of fashion and novelty alone attracted the curious Florentines to the new shrine. Times are, even in Tuscany, deplorably averse to modern canonisation, and the old saints need no trifling exertion to keep their seats; so that, after a short interval, scarcely any one in Florence seemed to have any recollection of the saint that had driven them mad, always excepting the meek and gentle Grand-Duchess, who, during her confinement at the time, never lost sight of her patroness, and with true maternal devotion christened her new-born child with her name.

Nor are these the only religious efforts by which the Grand-Duke of Tuscany strove to counteract the perversity of the people, or at least of the enlightened classes, who are always ready to ask for a reform of the most absurd superstitions of the Church of Rome. He surrounded, or, at least, according to an ancient and general practice, allowed the priests to sur-

the meditated attack on Fivizzano and Pontremoli likely to meet with the approval of the careful leaders of the Italian movement. It seems hard, indeed, that Christians

round even his imperial and royal lottery with the august apparatus of religious ceremony. The lottery, a system of kingly munificence and innocent popular amusement, of which the worldly wisdom of French and English legislators has deprived the people, is in full vigour in all the Italian states, but nowhere is it kept up in all its splendour as under the auspices of the Grand-Duke, who is said to derive from it an annual income of several millions of Florentine *lire*. That system of utter isolation, which opposed in Tuscany even the establishment of a stage-coach to Rome or Bologna, was, however, laid aside with the provident view to give the Tuscan people the chances of a Roman extraction. Every trick and delusion was resorted to that could allure the ignorant people to the *botteghino*. Pamphlets and volumes were published, intended to direct the inexperienced in their interpretation of omens and dreams. Such books needed not to fear the frowns of censorship, while works intended for the suppression of this voluntary tax—witness a popular poem written on that subject by Enrico Mayer, which could only be published at Lugano—were strictly forbidden. A scaffold is erected under the Portico degli Uffizi, decked so as to resemble either a temple or a stage. The Gonfaloniere and other officers are in attendance, and a priest in his robes is summoned to invoke the blessings of Heaven, and to sprinkle holy water on the urn on which the hopes of the confiding multitude are centered.

Such was, and such, to a great extent, is, the Grand-Ducal government; and to these sources of corruption, immediately springing from the court and government itself, must be added a laxity in the administration of the laws, or deliberate leniency towards atrocious criminals, by which the Prince, at one time, with a view to press forward his claims to the glory of a humane and enlightened lawgiver, had well-nigh converted, especially the city of Leghorn, into a den of thieves and murderers. It certainly sounds mighty pleasant to boast of the good effects of royal clemency when it is not safe to be out of doors after dusk; and it is easy to point exultingly to empty jails and moss-grown gibbets, when pick-pockets and cut-throats are seen walking about in perfect security. The reform of the penal code, the opening of criminal trials, are events of very recent date in Tuscany; nor was ever any leaning evinced towards liberal measures without being immediately, owing to Austrian interference, counteracted by acts of arbitrary despotism. For inconsistency, weakness, and hypocrisy, it might be said till 1846, commend us to the royal philanthropist, at the Pitti Palace.

and Italians should be passed over from one prince to another without even being consulted on the subject, but passively, unceremoniously, like the cattle on a farm or the negroes that are made over to the new owner of a plantation.

Such, however, are the dispositions of the Treaty of Vienna, and Austria watches over their fulfilment, even though she is the first to violate them. Unless the Italians are ready for a final debate with that hateful power, it will be more consistent with their dignity to abstain from vain vociferation. Protests break no bones, not any more than excommunications. So long as peace and order prevail, the great powers of Europe will be ready to secure the independence of the Italian states; and so far the patriots are safe, because the inviolability of their princes affords a screen for their revolutionary manœuvres. But what if the Grand-Duke of Tuscany, alarmed by those silly tricolour standards—by those more silly death-cries—scared by the arrest of his favourite *sbirri*, and the threatened hostilities against his cousin of Modena—were himself to implore the aid of his foreign allies against his unruly subjects? With his consent, and to his rescue Austria would be allowed to march unimpeded. Are then the Tuscans, or are the Italians, yet prepared for such a contingency? We would warn them against rashness and presumption. Such are the extremes into which southern people are apt to fall whenever suddenly released from abject fear and despondency. Let them bear in mind their disgraceful defeats of 1820. Europe has never forgiven them their dastardly defection. They fell away from the cause of freedom without striking a blow. It is only by prodigies of valour that they can *rehabilitate* themselves—redeem their national honour. Let them neither magnify nor undervalue the strength of their enemy. Austria is sure to recover from the trance of her present perplexity. It is a crumbling colossus, but

stands by force of habit—by time-hardened cohesion. Even in its ruin it can crush them. The same stubborn vitality it displayed in its death-grapple with Napoleon, may again be called forth in a no less desperate contest. It can rely on the unshaken devotion of its troops—on the unconquerable allegiance of its hereditary provinces. There is a certain number of tons of German *chair-à-canon* Italian freedom must cut its way through. Italy, at the best, can only send forth unorganised, unarmed masses; soldier-citizens, proverbially inefficient and cumbrous. The enthusiasm of civic or national guards cools before the hardships of a prolonged campaign, even before it is brought to the paragon of a battle-field. Let the imminence of their danger inspire the Italians with the genius of discipline. Let them measure well their own forces, weigh the fearful odds of the approaching rencontre. They have not one man—not one musket to spare. Even by a combination of every means at their disposal—even with the most unbroken union and harmony, the strife will be a severe one and of doubtful issue. But let them save their honour at any cost. Europe has been filled with admiration at their late success. Credit is given them for the *talent des révolutions*. Let them give proofs of revolutionary valour no less than revolutionary genius. Those bloodless victories too often lead to supineness and listlessness. Liberty too cheaply obtained is generally held too cheap. Public banquets, processions, medals, ovations, congratulations, will not rid the country of its foreign dominators. Religion has already too many festivals in Italy: let not freedom contribute to the laziness of those perpetual holidays. The Italians have work yet in store for them. They may be inoffensive and temperate as far as need be, but they must make ready for the worst. *In pace bellum parate.* Italians, let not these few moments of truce lull you into treacherous security—let not the gravity of the danger plunge you into base despondency—

let not the apparatus of the armed force of your enemy strike consternation into your hearts. In the firmness of your resolution—in the unanimity of your will—in the sanctity of your cause, you are invincible. Do your duty! God and man will aid those who are ready to aid themselves.

Painful, indeed, is the position of the poor Italians; great and most complicate the difficulties they have to contend with. In opposition to their princes they never were able to act, because these derived from Austrian support a strength which their own means did not afford. Nor can they now heartily move in accordance with their princes, because they know not how far they can feel confident of the honesty and firmness of their intentions; and because any attempt on their part to drive them on in spite of themselves brings them once more into collision with an overbearing extraneous power.

The King of Naples is no bad specimen of what Italian princes would be if they dared. He has found in the unlooked-for loyalty of his troops a strength which Tuscany and Lucca were not able to command. Concessions are with him out of the question. Torrents of blood will flow at the merest mention of them. Flushed with success, he is now ready to play a desperate game. No limits to his arrogance and presumption. A victorious despot at home, he will be sure to play the champion of despotism abroad. Any intention he ever harboured of adhesion to the project of national alliance will be haughtily dismissed. The league between the two Ferdinands (Austria and Sicily), with which Pius IX. was threatened at the very outset of his generous career, will now be loudly proclaimed: and if Austria muster up sufficient courage for a general attack, she may rely on the cooperation of the Lazzaroni bands of the southern Bourbon. Whilst the Austrian lion devours Romagna and Tuscany, Rome falls a prey to the Sicilian jackal. The cause of despotism is once more in the

ascendant. Such of the Italian princes as were dragged along in spite of themselves hasten to throw off the mask. The others waver and turn pale; and for twenty years to come there is silence and terror in Italy.

It is even so. Of all the Italian rulers the pope alone may be said to be a true Italian at heart. His resistance to Austrian encroachment is something unexampled in the country. Had he material forces to make good his proud words, or had the law of nations power to shield the weak from the arrogance of a wicked neighbour, there is no doubt but the court of Rome might stand forth as the first element of Italian nationality: as it is, however, Pius IX. has hitherto gone no further than a show of good intentions. Nothing has been settled for the *permanent* welfare of his subjects: nothing especially for the great work of Italian emancipation. Were the good pope to see himself utterly deserted by the faint-heartedness of his Italian allies, and sacrificed by the baseness of European diplomacy, he would be compelled, unless he abdicated, which is far from improbable, to recede step by step from the path he has been pursuing, and give in utterly, unconditionally, to the wishes of his northern dominator.

Notwithstanding our firm conviction that Pius IX., as a pope, can venture on no decisive measures for the welfare of Italy, we know not to what unexpected results his benevolent measures may lead. Personally, there is no man unwilling to pay the pope the most unqualified tribute of admiration. They are a brave, mettlesome race, those Ferretti. Firm even to stubbornness, bold even to rashness. They have also much of that inveteracy against Austria which an all-wise Providence seems to have implanted in Italian bosoms. One of them, the Commander of Malta, stood alone against a whole Hungarian regiment; every officer of which he challenged to single combat, in 1815, at Bologna. He killed three of his adversaries; the surviving staff hastened to tender their most ample

apologies. Such are now thy rulers, O Italy. The hour and the man are now with thee! What five-and-twenty years of delusions, of broken hearts, and martyrdoms have been so slowly maturing, is now to be reaped in one summer day. The irresolute King of Sardinia, the specious despot of Tuscany, have power to achieve what the pope could only begin. Oh! why have they not the heart of a Ferretti? Till now they have only been good on compulsion. Every day saw them lowered by one inch from the proud altitude which appeared to them the ideal of monarchic sublimity. Every day the waves of public opinion swelled around them. Their subjects owed them nothing. It was a hostile game; the winner and the loser parted with mutual animosity towards each other. Ferretti understands better his position. Thank God! he was not born on the throne. He was a man, a citizen, a soldier; a creature of flesh and blood; not a puffed-up thing, set apart from his fellow-beings. Thank God, also, he is an Italian; born in Italy of Italian parentage and lineage. Not a half-thawed Savoyard, like he of Carignano; not a stiff and starch Austrian, like the pseudo-philosopher of Tuscany; not an emasculate Bourbon, like the two royal things at Lucca and Naples.

The ways of the Lord are wonderful! Now can mankind see the great aim of the continuation of Popery. But for that superannuated creed and worship, all national elements were at war with the existing powers in Italy. It had been provided that the pope should be an Italian. The papal see is the only throne with which the name of Italy may be identified. Henceforth Ferretti's successors are, as long as they choose, virtually the kings of Italy. It is difficult to foresee what consequences this national tendency may have on the welfare of the Catholic world. It may indeed lead to a final breaking up of the church: Austria, disappointed in her political intrigues, will try to spite the pope by favouring the interests of the German

Neo-catholics. The allegiance of the Gallic church hangs on a mere thread; and the inevitable fall of the Jesuits will deprive the pope of his most active spiritual militia. Be it so! Long live Italy! and may Providence look to the interests of the Christian church. Let the bond of Catholicism be made utterly independent of political connections: let papal supremacy be once more based on the inalienable ascendancy of virtue. The exigencies of the Catholic world too long and too often interfered with the sacred rights of the Italians as an independent people. Austria, France, and Spain have too long swayed the conclave with their mean intrigues. Henceforth, or we are much mistaken, the Romans will manage their own matters, and reject all impertinent interference. Pius IX., God grant him long life! will provide for the safe election of his successor. Nay, so long as one Ferretti survives, we see no harm in the family monopolising the chair of St. Peter. The gratitude of the Italians can hardly do less in return for their manly conduct. Let the Ferretti be the Vasa of Italy. In proportion as light prevails, the inconsistency of spiritual with temporal government will become more and more obvious. Rome will have its King, Dictator, or Emperor, besides its Bishop of bishops, and the secular authority will be more firmly constituted by regular succession. With Rome as centre of a well-organised federation, Italy will fare well enough. Such are at least the hopes and wishes of the moderate party now on the ascendancy. A Subalpine kingdom under the sway of the House of Sardinia: a Cisalpine or Lombardo-Venetian kingdom to be rescued—whenever it may please Providence—from the hands of the Austrians. An Etruscan kingdom destined to swallow up, by peaceful aggregation, Lucca and Massa; the small states of Parma and Modena to be merged in the Cispadane portion of the Roman territory; and the Two Sicilies in the South. Five states, in short, easily defined by natural boundaries; with five

thriving capitals, with as much uniformity of administration, and as much unity of commercial and political interests, as may best promote the universal welfare; with the great bond—most happily never broken—of a common religion, language, and literature: such is the beau-ideal of Italy in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Such a state of things will not, indeed, meet the views of the most sanguine patriots: it will not especially come up to the daring schemes of Young Italy: who were planning the establishment of an Italian democratic republic—one and indivisible, with one metropolis at Rome, and with utter subversion of all powers now in existence. But even Young Italy will, henceforth, have fair play. Its sweeping notions will become the theme for open discussion. Freedom of opinion is already, *de facto*, established in Italy: it will be organised and sanctioned as soon as the present struggle draws to its close. Mazzini's voice, we trust, will be heard in the diets and councils of the national confederacy, whenever and however established. His daring conceptions, his *humanitarian* theories which, even under the unfavourable instrument of secret societies and clandestine publications, have acted so forcibly on the minds of his countrymen, and gone so far towards hastening the crisis of which we are now witnessing the consummation, will now acquire a greater momentum through the agency of free circulation. His address to Charles Albert of Sardinia, published in 1831, possession of, or acquaintance with which cost many a young enthusiast his head in Piedmont and Genoa, is now reprinted in a new edition of several thousand copies, and exposed for sale in every book-stall at Florence and Rome.

It is even so that human progress gains ground. Every year finds us a new stadium beyond. Luckily there are also critical eras when the human races advance at a tearing gallop—or rather epochs in which they become all at once fully aware of the speed of their motion.

Italy has now reached one of these fearful crises. Whatever the result of the present difference between Austria and Rome, opinion in Italy will have made a gigantic stride. If evil prevails at the present moment, and the golden dreams of the federalists are to be broken short by the thunder of the Austrian cannon, the revolution which Force puts off will be more complete and decisive at some more propitious opportunity. In 1820, in 1831, also, Austria prevailed. But every one of those triumphs gave a new impulse to Opinion. "Yet one victory," she may exclaim with the Greek conqueror, "and I am undone." In 1820 she had only to strive with a few discordant aristocrats and dissatisfied officers. Eleven years later she had only to put down a few riotous students, and unorganised citizens. Now she has whole states, compact, unanimous, to struggle with; all the best feelings of religion and loyalty, of veneration and duty; all classes; and for the present, all conflicting opinions and parties are enlisted in the cause of her adversaries. Nay more! the frankness and assurance of one starts up new enemies against her at every step. The example of one undutiful vassal encourages the defection of all others. The minions she reckoned upon as the most passive, most willing instruments, evince restiveness and wilfulness. Together with Rome, Florence and Turin fall away from her. Now or never is the moment for the two-headed eagle to unfold her talons. And it must be a hopeless effort at the best. The most signal success, we have said it, only prepares the way for more signal reverses.

But to whatever results their present portentous expectations may bring the Italians, it behoves them to be up and doing. Wind and tide are now in their favour. No obstacle remains to hinder their great work of moral regeneration. Let them proceed actively, cheerfully, unanimously. Let them begin their revolution by a domestic and social reform. Let them call to mind the noble pre-

cept of their poet: "Freedom weds not with corruption; it shrinks from the polluting contact of vice."* Let them wash off the soilures by which long thraldom has defiled their national character. Their princes could only allure, not force them to immorality. Let this faint dawn of a happier day be spent, as the morning should, in a general ablution. Let them learn to revere the sanctity of family ties. Let their conduct give the lie to malevolent foreigners, whose finger of scorn is still levelled at them.

Let also public spirit keep pace with the sanctity of private life. Let them beware of SELF! It steals to our hearts under a thousand disguises; it blends and identifies itself with our purest motives. If they love their country better than themselves—if desire of fame or thirst for public applause have no share in the deliberations of their popular leaders, they will not commit themselves on hasty and immature enterprises. They will not act by chance; they will not obey an instinctive want of action; but wait until they have secured the success of their cause, or until they feel certain that they cannot succumb without ennobling it by their devotion.

Much is there to be done by them even in this peaceful interval of preparation. The moral and material improvement of the condition of the people will afford them long years of employment. There are prejudices to overcome, errors to combat, animosities to hush up—a whole brutalised mass to redeem. Every man they educate becomes a soldier in the national ranks. Nor can they ever have one too many. One great object have they—to arm against their common enemy; and education, in their case, is a means of armament.

We have not disguised the magnitude of their enterprise. The Colossus of Austria is not only threatening; it is al-

* "Libertà mal costume non sposa
Par sozzure non mette mai piè."—BERCHET.

ready weighing on their necks. But that Colossus does not possess a strength commensurate with its dimensions. The name of Austria is, if possible, even more unpopular amongst the states of the German Confederacy than in Italy itself. Her rash step at Ferrara has emboldened her rivals, Prussia, Bavaria, and Wirtemberg, to declare against her. Nay more, at home, or very near it, in Poland, Hungary, Bohemia—Austria rests on smouldering volcanoes. The Sclavonians in Carinthia and Illyria are already astir. Her butcher-work in Gallicia and Cracow is yet fresh in men's minds. Like Robespierre, she is stifled by the blood she has shed. The enormities she was then guilty of were easily perpetrated, because they took place at a distance, in an inaccessible corner of her empire. Besides, she was there said to act as a peace-maker, a preserver of the public order. But in Italy she is herself the aggressor; the disturbance arises from her own misdemeanour. The voice and hand of every friend of peace, no less than of every lover of liberty, will be raised against her. Forty thousand Italian soldiers garrison the fortresses of Hungary; passive, blind instruments in the hands of Austria in ordinary times: men who obey orders and give themselves hardly the trouble to think for themselves. Still they are human beings, and Italians. There is a limit to their blindness and passivity. Austria—every one knows it—the cabinet of Vienna know it—stand by the mere force of habit; her statesmen feel that the slightest shock may bring about universal dissolution; they strive to avert their fate by daring strokes of policy, the very reverse of the plodding, temporising *routine* to which they owed their rise.

Nor is Louis Philippe, with his unprincipled cabinet, a much more formidable adversary. However fortunate, that wicked old man is not omnipotent in France. There is a limit to his power, though none to his ill will and duplicity. He is not so much to be dreaded as an enemy, as

he is to be mistrusted as an ally. His alliance with Austria, if pushed too far, might hurl him from his throne. The hand of Providence which has, in so many instances, so unaccountably saved, without reforming him, may perhaps reach him yet. He has awful scores to settle with Heaven, nor has he one good man for a friend upon earth.

The *federalists* in Switzerland have only yesterday baffled both those evil powers. Pius IX.'s schemes of amelioration, and the efforts of Sardinia and Tuscany, have turned the current of thought throughout Europe. Never was public opinion so readily, so unanimously manifested in behalf of crowned innovators. Let their subjects make the best of it. Let them proceed hand-in-hand with their rulers, so long as these latter are true to their trust: and let them meanwhile gain strength sufficient to enable them to adopt coercive measures, if the well-tried faithlessness of their princes at any time renders them necessary.

But if the Italians have reason to congratulate themselves upon, and to feel strong of, the suffrage and sympathy of enlightened nations, let them look upon none of them for material assistance; let them even disregard any promise, and accept with mistrust any offer to that effect. Well-constituted states, in modern times, undertake no war upon merely chivalrous principles of right and wrong. The English, the people in the world the most indifferent to the destinies of other nations—the truest to the old saying, "Everybody for himself, and God for us all," are actually in raptures with the present movement in Italy. Nor is theirs a sterile friendship, if you only gain it. But, as a commercial power, they shrink from all active interference where their own material interests are not immediately concerned—and Italy grows no port wine.

John Bull is a lover of peaceful, gentleman-like revolutions. He asks no better than to befriend liberty all over the world. He forgets at what dire a price he had to win it for himself. Rebellions and civil wars were for him ne-

cessary evils. They did him a deal of good in the end; but he is by no means satisfied that equal benefit may be derived from them in all instances, or that the same advantages may not be come at without their concomitant inflictions.

Much as he is disposed to favour liberty, he loves peace even better. He is loth to fight; not, by any means, from want of pluck, but because, as a wag sang it,

"He has a Mrs. Bull at home, and many little Bulls."

He looks upon himself as the guardian of the tranquillity of Europe. Every nation in the world may be free and welcome, but there must be no squabble about it. Liberty, he reasons, may give birth to trade, but it is peace alone that fosters it. John revolts at oppression, and feels for the oppressed. He looks on all men as brethren, wishes them happy, enlightened, enfranchised; but, over and above all, he must have his chance of a bargain with them.

Moreover, if you come to that, he has not made up his mind whether all nations are equally fit for the blessings of bill of rights and trial by jury. Southerners, especially, he apprehends, are too hot-headed for rational freedom. The French have shown it; they writhed, they tumbled and floundered, till they fell from the frying-pan into the burning coals; from King Log into King Citizen. The Spaniards and Portuguese fared no better, and he, John, would thank his stars, had he never thought of meddling with them. After all the trouble they cost him, see! the former serve him with a Montpensier marriage, the latter worry their queen till John soon expects to have to find her in board and lodging in London.

Italy, too, since he helped to settle her in 1815, has never ceased to give the honest peace-maker some cause of uneasiness. He has heard of *Carbonari* till he fancied all the fogs in his native atmosphere must be the conse-

quence of the shaking of their eternal charcoal bags. He has heard of Young Italy, and wondered whether its partisans are to be made out by white waistcoats, like their brethren in England, or by green inexpressibles, like their cousins in Ireland. He has even, good easy man, been at the trouble of rummaging their papers and forging their seals, for the sake of quiet living. In short, he has always been on the look-out for squalls in that quarter, and although the threatened explosion invariably vanished in smoke, still the apprehension alone kept him fretting and fidgeting, just as if every rise in Romagna, every Calabrian riot, might have power to shut up every oil and Italian shop in the three kingdoms.

Let not, therefore, the sight of a few of her Majesty's men-of-war give rise to insane expectations in Italy. The English are too wise ever to fight other people's battles; nor could any reasonable being look or wish for an armed interference on their part. But it is, we regret to say, equally idle to expect from them an act of justice that would cost them nothing. There is to be—the Whig Cabinet have but yesterday proclaimed it—there is to be no diplomatic intercourse between England and Rome. The wrathful vociferations of a few old women at Oxford proved stronger than the unanimous acclamation of every generous heart in the three kingdoms. Lord Stanley has taken the best pains to point out the line of policy it is the duty of England to pursue. England is "bound by the faith of treaties not only not to aid but even to resist any attempt of Italy towards the attainment of her independence." Nor was it merely the doting old Tory that spoke there. The English, as a nation, have a pious veneration for "the faith of treaties." So far, that is, as these refer to the interests of established governments. Let the king of the Two Sicilies trample on a constitution they obliged him to award, for which they stood sponsors in 1812, they have nothing to say to it. Let Austria lay violent hands upon

Cracow, a defenceless city without a paltry king or duke at the head of it, and England will be satisfied with the coldest protest, as a mere matter of form. But let the Italians writhe under the yoke—let them only utter one harmless, unmeaning cry to assert that they have as much right to be masters in their own house, as Lord Stanley in his castle, and behold England is "bound not only not to aid, but to resist their object;" and the Whig Cabinet, who deemed it expedient to countenance the Italian princes in their benevolent intentions, so long as by so doing they were enabled to act in opposition to Louis Philippe, and have a meagre *revanche* for the trick that had been played upon them at the court of Madrid—now the matter of the Spanish marriages is likely to be settled to their own satisfaction, they are only anxious "to do every thing possible to avoid collisions between the States of Italy;" and although they "venture to give their opinion that they should be represented at Rome," they dare not boldly propose the abolition of an absurd law, grounded upon feelings of exploded fanaticism and craven jealousy; they will not venture upon a plain motion "for establishing diplomatic relations with the Roman see;" but will rather suffer the Pontiff, in whose praises they are so very eloquent, to be bullied by Austria and betrayed by France, they will dishearten him by the sad conviction, that, with the exception of the Turk at Constantinople, he has not a single friend amongst the sovereigns of Europe.

It is even so: the mild virtues of Pius IX., his humanity and magnanimity, has overcome the ferocity of the College of Muftis. The Oxford Dons are alone inexorable; and the so-called liberals, at the head of the English government, stand too utterly in awe of them to follow what they profess to be the dictates of their conscience—to adopt a measure which they avow would be one both of justice and expedience.

Meanwhile it is well that the Italians are warned in

time; and they will have only themselves to blame if, as we heard of the Sicilians the other day, they dream of placing themselves under English protection."

For the last eight-and-twenty years the Italians have sought the solution of the most arduous of problems: "How liberty and independence may be obtained and secured without fighting for it." This arose, not indeed from any native aversion to hard knocks on their part, as sneering foreigners in more favourable circumstances are fain to imagine, but from the fearful odds they were aware they had to contend with, and from the appalling consequences unsuccessful attempts have invariably brought, and would invariably bring upon them.

Of this fond conceit it is, nevertheless, most important that they should be cured. Their emancipation must be the result of a great struggle; and no one—no national prince or foreign power—will fight their battle for them. Servitude is their fate, till they feel strong enough to grapple with it; and until they can feel confidence in their own forces, it is well for them to keep quiet, to accept the poor boon of a council of state, a mock freedom of the press, any thing they can get from their popes and princes, and keep quiet. But, if they really aspire to independence, let them display the manly virtues that alone can secure it. There are battles that may be fought even in the most profound peace; without calling down upon them the vengeance of the Holy Alliance—without spreading unnecessary alarm among the peace-makers.

The people of Ferrara had declared they would sooner see their town a heap of ruins than suffer it to fall under the Austrian yoke. The population of Fivizzano, fifteen hundred in number, had declared themselves ready to migrate *en masse* sooner than suffer themselves to be made over to a despot they hated. It is much to be deplored that neither party were as good as their word. Such trials of heroism have lately been witnessed, and even on a

larger scale. Oh! that the Ferrarese had imitated the people of Moscow, in 1812!—that they had left the Austrians to exercise their sway over empty streets and dismantled houses! Ferrara is already a desert as it is, with grass growing in its main streets: it required no mighty effort to turn it into a howling wilderness. The unhoused population might have sought refuge with their brethren of Bologna and Ravenna. It was even so that the ejected Milanese found a shelter in the neighbouring cities, when their noble edifices were levelled with the ground under Frederic Barbarossa. From the ashes of the Lombard metropolis arose the liberties of Italy in the middle ages, and the triumph of the Lombard League; the fairest page in Italian history. *Extremis malis, extrema remedia.* The downfal of Ferrara, or, what was still easier, the abandonment of Fivizzano, might have been the signal of a new national emancipation. The history of the country is full of such instances of patriotic devotion. Nine-tenths of the population of Pisa relinquished their homes when their republic fell a prey to Florentine ambition, even though they felt that their expatriation could have no favourable result on the course of immutable destiny, and that their farewell to their homes was irrevocable.

But who can calculate the result of a similar sacrifice at the present day? It would give an instance of Italian steadiness of purpose—it would show friends and enemies that Italy is terribly in earnest—that national interests begin to be paramount over all considerations of local patriotism. The houseless population would supply the national army with the best forlorn hopes. The sympathies awakened by the poor wanderers in the neighbouring states would be blended with a feeling of necessity to provide for their own preservation.

O Italians! when will you learn that hopeless thraldom is only shaken off by desperate measures! If an appeal to arms is for the present out of the question, why have you

not recourse to acts of negative heroism? Show the world that you can do more for your country than shout and flatter your princes. Let the noble lines of your bard become your watch-word:—

"Liberty smiles on daring hearts,
And wills that never swerve;
Of manly virtues 'tis the test—
None, who can die, need serve."*

Meanwhile, notwithstanding the applause that the European nations have raised in your favour, your own brethren abroad are far from placing their reliance on you. Behold Mazzini, your idol of yesterday, and Gioberti, to-day's idol, tarry still in a foreign land. The latter unwilling to set foot on Italian soil so long as one Jesuit saddens it with his presence; the former determined to die of vain longings for home, until the Austrians be driven beyond the Alps—until at least the cry for their expulsion be raised in good earnest.

The exile's lot, even under harassing circumstances, is far from being the most dreadful to the high-minded and generous: and unless he sinks into home-sickness and despondency; unless he indulges in lonely and misanthropic habits, the Italian, travelling abroad, feels his mind refreshed and his spirits elated by the enjoyment of freedom; and, on his return, the miserable spectacle of a lazy priesthood, of an irreclaimable, beggarly populace, makes him loathe the very atmosphere of that genial climate as the tainted air of a prison.

An exile's love for his country too easily contracts something of an impatient and wrathful character. That intolerable conceit that makes the Italian dream of "Preemi-

* "Libertà non fallisce ai volenti,
Ma il sentier de' perigli ell' addita;
Ma promessa a chi ponvi la vita,
Non è premio d'inerte desir."—BERCHET.

nence," is so utterly rooted out of his mind by his intercourse with more favourably situated nations, that he falls easily into opposite extremes, and is too apt to expect of his countrymen what exceeds the powers of human nature.

He forgets that the Italians were hardly allowed to consider themselves as members of the great European family. That of the headlong march of intellect, so wonderfully changing the state of civilised societies, only a faint sound is now beginning to be heard on the sunny side of the Alps.

There is, in Italy, more daring of conception than power of execution; more energy of life, more want of exertion, than can be turned to profitable objects; more impatience and restlessness than real strength and serenity of mind.

Even intellectual exertion is incompatible with utter stagnation of political life. Italian thinkers and writers sink into despondency, waiting for the great crisis that is to put them in full possession of their faculties. Their hands fall overpowered as they see the results at which they have arrived, late and weary, after years of solitary efforts, thrown into utter insignificance by the wide and rapid attainments to which a wise distribution of labour has led literary and scientific associations abroad.

Southern people, since the spirit of chivalrous adventure spread among them a distaste for gregarious undertakings, have not yet learned thoroughly to understand the utter helplessness of individuals, and the consequent necessity of relying on the combined efforts of masses. There is a jealousy or self-sufficiency, a mutual disdainfulness and indocility, which has contributed to oppose progress in Italy, scarcely less than the forbidding frowns of Austrian suspicion.

This saddens the exile on his first restoration to his country. This has brought back to France and England not a few of the most sanguine, whom the first tidings of Pius IX.'s amnesty had gathered round the throne of the

"Papal Reformer." Too many of the evils of Italy appear to them incurable. Nor do they think it worth their while to set to work with a good will until the two vital questions are set definitely at rest: that of utter independence and unlimited freedom of opinion.

Shall the present generation ever witness the fulfilment of such anticipations? Is this first faint streak of light the real dawn of a new day, or only an aurora as fleeting as it is illusory, and only ending in a still greater condensation of darkness?

Has Providence, indeed, brighter days in store for Italy? or shall evil prevail until the most undaunted longanimity is broken? Must we despair even of the omnipotence of Thought? Shall this present intellectual strife, dating from the very epoch of the utter annihilation of physical resistance, prove equally unavailing and powerless?

Thought can do nothing for Italy, until it be matured into action. The Italians, as yet, can only think on sufferance. They have no right to the free exercise of their faculties. The Pope and the Grand Duke of Tuscany, have only loosened, not removed, their subjects' fetters; and even this relaxation was merely owing to a moment of Austrian confusion and perplexity.

Meanwhile, it is well that many in Italy believe and hope: many for whom, without this faith and hope, life would be only wormwood and gall. Reason and virtue achieve only possible things. Faith alone works miracles.

THE END.

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